BING

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1996

No. 112

THE INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE

THE
INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE

Founded 1950

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Membership renewals fall due on 1st. January each year and subscription rates effective for 1996 are:-

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Mainland Europe, including Eire	£9 per annum
USA and Canada	US $20 per annum
Australia and New Zealand	A$30 per annum
South America	£11.50 per annum

All remittances should be sent in **£ sterling** payable to 'Michael Crampton - ICC' with the exception of (a) U.S. and Canadian members who should send their remittances in U.S. dollars to F. B. Wiggins (b) Australian and New Zealand members who should pay David Currington in Australian dollars (c) Mainland European members (not Eire) who should pay Etty Gits in £ sterling. For addresses see inside front cover.

Articles for inclusion in the magazine should be sent to the Magazine Editor.
Other Correspondence concerning membership or other aspects of the club's affairs should be sent to the Hon. Secretary/Treasurer.

BING is the official journal of the International Crosby Circle and is published in April, August and December of each year. Opinions expressed in articles are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the ICC. All original material Copyright ICC 1996.

EDITORIAL

Well here we are, a long way into 1996 and still activity concerning Bing is buoyant. In this edition, we have an introduction to Bing on the Internet, there is another LaserDisc review and details of how to obtain the new Songography from Frans van der Kolff are included. Praise is coming in for the latest volume of Fred Reynolds' 'The Crosby Collection' set and Colin Pugh has written a review for us. Many of you liked the Calendar as well and thank you for your kind words about this and about the last edition of the magazine. I was relieved to hear that members in the UK and most of those in the USA received their copies of BING 111 before Christmas and certainly members in the USA owe much to Wig Wiggins who twice braved severe blizzards to ensure that the copies were despatched in time.

Wig has also been involved with the new MCA CD as you will read and also with a new publication featuring Bing which should be available by the time you receive this magazine. The book will be called 'Bing Crosby In The 30's' and I am putting brief details of this and the series it is taken from in Trading Post.

The deaths of the showbiz greats of Bing's era continue and we record the passing of Dean Martin and Gene Kelly in later pages. We are also very sorry to announce the death of Olive Crampton, the mother of our own Michael Crampton. Over 30 years ago, Mrs. Crampton generously threw her home open to the Crosby friends of the young Michael and thus started the annual Leeds meetings. We all owe her a huge debt for this and I know that you will all join me in expressing our sympathies to Michael and his family.

I hope that you like our cover picture which comes from the nice scene in 'Rhythm On The River' when Bing sings the title song in a pawn shop using the drumsticks in the style of Gene Krupa.

Bing continues to pop up in all kinds of programmes and even I was interviewed by a local BBC radio station called GMR some months ago to talk about his career. I have only just received a tape of this broadcast which I am passing on to Bert Bishop to review if he feels it worthwhile. It was a strange experience being interviewed in a corner of the BBC canteen with the interviewer throwing all sorts of random questions about Bing at me which he then edited into his programme. As we go to press, news is just coming in about the imminent demise of the BBC Radio 2 programme 'Sounds Easy'

presented by our good friend, David Jacobs, which is being taken off the air at the end of March. It is one of the changes being introduced by the new Controller of Radio 2, Jim Moir, to tackle the declining size of his audience. This is a great pity and if you feel strongly about the decision, please make your views known to Mr. Moir. The address is contained in Les Gaylor's article.

Finally, I am continuing to work on a fairly detailed chronology of Bing's life and my plan is to carry out a little more research into old copies of Variety magazine at the British Library and then go to Gonzaga in June to examine their old files. By then I should be able to put together quite an interesting document which hopefully will be available to members by the end of the year. My holiday this year will take my wife and I to Seattle, Spokane, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Palm Springs and San Diego and I hope to fit in a fair amount of Crosbyana on the way. My wife is very patient!

Copy date for the next magazine is June 25th. but please note that the August edition may well be a little late because of the impact of holidays.

Who Was That Lady?

My query about the identity of the lady shown with Bing on page 50 of the last edition brought an interesting post bag and here are some extracts.

'I'm sure you recognised Rita Hayworth so I won't bother to write you about it.' (Brian Lewis)

'Could this be a young Kathryn Grant?' (Greg Van Beek)

'I think it could be either Trudy Erwin, Carol Richards or Nicole Maurey.' (Paul Hennessy)

'Hey, have you heard of one Rita Hayworth? If the article had appeared in the April edition, I would have thought that to be an April-fool hoax!' (Hendrik Tiedemann)

'Jean and I offer Nicole Maurey - does anyone else agree?' (John Bignell)

'The lady in the photo with Bing looks to me, remarkably like Rita Hayworth and yet I'm not convinced that it is. Rita would have been 35 years old at the time the photo was taken'. (George Patmore)

'I've always maintained that the lady is Nicole Maurey although at first glance there does seem to be a resemblance to Rita Hayworth.' (Gwen Harvey)

Gwen also enclosed photographs of Nicole with Bing in 'Little Boy Lost' and 'High Time' and I must admit that I can see the similarity but even so they were not conclusive. I even got out my copy of 'Pal Joey' recently and looked carefully at Rita Hayworth in the film and more or less convinced myself she was not the lady in the photo. Then the following letter arrived from David Frankham of Santa Fe:-

"The mystery lady with Bing in the December issue is Nicole Maurey. She was filming 'Secret of the Incas' with Charlton Heston and Robert Young at Paramount while 'White Christmas' was in production and probably just strolled in to watch Bing at work on the finale to the picture."

Well that has the ring of authenticity to it and my vote does therefore have to go to Nicole Maurey. Can someone either confirm my choice from film magazines of the time or from the video of 'Secret of the Incas' ? We shall have to prove it one way or the other won't we?

A Christmas Competition

Again a good postbag offering a suitable title for the photo of Bing and Carole Lombard in the sea (taken from the film 'We're Not Dressing'). The answer had to be the title of a film (not necessarily a Bing film) and my favourites were:

Going My Way
Here Come the Waves
The Sea Shall Not Have Them (until they have had each other!)
A Night to Remember (the film was the story of the sinking of the Titanic)
The Lady Takes A Sailor
The Wet Parade
Fantastic Voyage
Cockleshell Heroes
Mantrap
Many Rivers To Cross
The Odd Couple
The Trouble With Harry!
Say One For Me
Goodbye Columbus

It was difficult to select a winner from the list but with the parameters that 'your aim should be to find an amusing and apt title that fits the picture' I decided to go for 'The Lady Takes a Sailor'. This was a 1949 Warner Bros. film starring Jane Wyman, Dennis Morgan, Eve Arden and William Frawley. The winner is Stan White and he receives a refund of his 1996 sub. Thanks to all of you who sent in entries for the competition.

Malcolm Macfarlane

Secretary/ Treasurer's Report

Once again it is a great pleasure for your secretary to report a successful ICC year, a year in which your team has brought you 3 further issues of our much admired journal BING. Members have enthused about the contents of the magazine and we are encouraged by the praise which we have received, praise which has come from 'old hands' and new members. We aim to bring you more original material in the coming year INCLUDING, we hope, a separate publication of Malcolm Macfarlane's Chronology of Bing's life.

MEMBERSHIP

My request for early payment of dues was well received as an inspection of the annual accounts will reveal. However there are 80 renewals outstanding and we trust members will be prompt in sending their late subscription.

NEW MEMBERS

COMPLIMENTARY MEMBERSHIP (U S A) The ICC is delighted to extend a warm hand of welcome to Howard M Crosby (the son of the late Ted Crosby) who recently met and spent time with our industrious member from Teddington, John Marshall. John video-ed an interview with Howard and please see Trading Post for further information.

BRITISH ISLES

In our last issue of BING we gave Douglas Dent's address as Holmes Chapel when in fact it should have read Burton Latimer so apologies to Douglas. For this issue it is a great pleasure to welcome - David Kemp (London), Doreen Thurston & Mr R J Burchell (Essex), Mr E Hey (Merseyside), Allen Curren (Liverpool), Sandra Bird (Leics), John Browne (Birmingham), James Dineen (Glasgow), Mr R J Russell (Holmes Chapel), Mrs E J Royle (Rimmer, Lancs), Mr M G Sheraton (Sunderland). May each of you derive enjoyment from your membership of the ICC.

(Editor: John Browne is my uncle and the man responsible for first introducing me to Bing's voice. He has much to answer for!)

DONATIONS

The ICC is most fortunate in enjoying 'extra' support from its members and here we salute 75 very generous enthusiasts who have contributed a donation during the last few months. Our grateful thanks to each of you.

Roger Addey, Ian Arnott, Maurice Beardmore, John Bignell, Donald Bostock, Les Brice, John Byron, Mr J Cable, Dave Campkin, Mr J P Carpenter, Ron Chaplin, Geoff Chappells, Matthew Conroy, John Coomes, Allen Curran, Sylvia Crellin, Thomas Cunningham, Peter Diffley, Bill Emery, Margaret Exton, Larry Farrell, Arthur Fisher, Brian Ford, Mr R E Gould, Mr L S Grassby, Doug Haywood, Stan Hellens, Des Hellier, Paul Hennessy, Jack Hobday, Thomas Hughes, Bill Huntington, Roy Irvine, Robert Larkin, Sylvia Lawrence, Edgar Lawson, Brian Lewis, Don Love, Mike Mansley, John Marshall, Tom Matthews, John McVicar, Leslie Mills, Peter Monaghan, Mr V J Monk, Thomas Mooney, Nicholas Morrison, Alf Mutter, George O'Reilly, Michael O'Toole, Wally Oldfield, Goronwy Owen, Lionel Pairpoint, Cyril Parker, George Patmore, Alf Peyton, Arnold Pope, Clive Roberts, Harry Ross, Derek Saunders, Dennis Saville, Tom Shaw, Alistaire Sherlow, Arthur Smith, Dave Spong, Jean & Matthew Sprott, John Stiles, John Tasker, Frank Toner, Mr A J Vaughan, Trevor Wagstaff, Tom White, Stan Woodford, John Weir, Bill Wesley.

Although a long list for your secretary and editor to type out, we are determined that all donations will be acknowledged in the pages of BING. Thanks to all.

DEATHS

With sadness I must draw members attention to the following deaths:

MRS OLIVE CRAMPTON - My Mum who died on Christmas Day aged 84 will be remembered with affection by those members who attended the early Leeds meetings. Although she was not a Bing enthusiast herself, Mum did host these parties with humour and good provision and she was happy to make Bing Collectors welcome at her home once per year. We are missing her.

SYD BALDWIN & LEONARD ANDERSON - Both members lived in Essex and we have learnt from their partners that Syd & Leonard derived great pleasure from their membership of the club. We extend our sincere condolences to their families.

ICC COLOUR CALENDAR

We are pleased to place on record our thanks to Don & Peter Haizelden for their industry and enthusiasm in providing the art work for this year's calendar. Copies can still be obtained by writing to John Joyce at John Joyce, Bookbinder & Finisher, Saltmeadows Road, Gateshead, Tyne & Wear NE8 3AH. Thanks also to John for his support in publishing the Calendar. With Fred's book, the Colour Calendar, several CDs promised and the likely publication of a BING CHRONOLOGY along with the Giddins' tome we have much to be grateful for as we look forward to our 1996 Crosby season.

Until August! My thanks to all members for your loyal support.

Michael Crampton

The Crosby Collection 1926 - 1977

Colin Pugh reviews Part 4 (1951 - 1960) of the wonderful series of books by Fred Reynolds.

The title - 'The Crosby Collection' - does not do this work justice. One could be forgiven for assuming it to be a simple listing of Bing's recordings - but how wrong they would be. We are treated to a mine of information - geographical, historical and a veritable 'WHO'S WHO' of the entertainment industry. The wealth of knowledge of every facet of Bing's life, here displayed and in which we are now privileged to share, could only come from the pen of a dedicated and lifelong collector and appreciator of Bing's contribution to the 20th. Century.

We are extremely fortunate to have in the world-wide elite band of Crosby collectors, a man of Fred Reynolds' unsurpassed talents as a critic in every sphere of Crosby's life. Able to talk eloquently and interestingly about Bing's performances in every medium - Radio, TV, Films, Recording and Theatre - his private life and hobbies and enterprises. In Fred, we have a past master of the English language with immaculate composition that never bores, always informs and is a delight to read. The year by year summary, heading and relative to each years' activities as it is, covers Bing's private, social and commercial pursuits in a manner hitherto unattempted, thereby giving us a far greater insight, appreciation and continuity than any previous biography or autobiography has attempted.

Those of us who had the first three parts of this stupendous portrait of Bing have been eagerly awaiting Part 4 and are not disappointed. It is understood that Part 5 - the final part of this massive project - is now almost completed. This, of course, will take us up to Bing's death on October 14th. 1977, the latter part of which period found Bing extremely active in all spheres. Perhaps we can 'twist the arm' of the powers that be, to let us have the concluding part in a shorter lapse of time that we have experienced in waiting for Part 4! Probably one of the best ways to accomplish this is by giving Part 4 our immediate and total support.

Colin Pugh

(Editor: Colin is absolutely right. Order your copy from John Joyce now. See separate insert with magazine. I believe that Part 5 has virtually been finished by Fred so it is now a question of printing and binding. Let us hope for news in the next edition of BING.)

INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR 12 MONTHS TO 31st DECEMBER 1995

Income		Expenditure	
Subscriptions & Donations	6894	BING (PRINTING)	1900
Back Issues	114	BING (POSTAGE)	894
	7008		2794
		Secretarial	237
		AGM	285
		Editorial	58
Balance 31. 12. 1994.	5037	Balance 31.12.1995.	8814
Interest 1995	143		
	12188		12188

Note: Expenditure on printing and postage in respect of BING 111 will appear in the 1996 accounts. Income is above average for this year since most of the membership subscription and donations for 1996 were received in December 1995. The accounts do therefore show a slightly misleading picture as we are not as comfortable as indicated, taking into account the outstanding amounts due for BING 111 and bearing in mind that our existing cash resources have got to see us through until the end of 1996. However the Club is reasonably placed and well able to cope with the likely demands on it in 1996.

BING ON LASERDISC - PART 2

In BING 110, Ken Barnes reviewed several Laserdiscs featuring Bing and he promised to return to look at some more. True to his word, Ken now first of all considers two of Bing's biggest films and then his last film musical appearance.

BLUE SKIES / HOLIDAY INN (MCA ENCORE Double Feature 2-disc set)

What a logical and convenient double-feature release this is. Although I previously reviewed the earlier single laser release of 'Holiday Inn', this new digitally remastered version offers a superior picture and a warmer, smoother sound. 'Blue Skies', making its first appearance on laser, has never looked better. MCA have unearthed a truly pristine print and the sets, costumes and colours are absolutely ravishing in their depth and clarity. Seeing it on laser is the next best thing to viewing it on a cinema screen.

It is, perhaps, fitting that the programme opens with 'Blue Skies'. While it is the more spectacular of the two films and has the bigger budget, it has the weaker script. 'Holiday Inn', in fact, is by far the better of the two and features stronger original songs. Apart from the legendary 'White Christmas', there are gems like 'Be Careful, It's My Heart' and 'You're Easy to Dance With'.

'Blue Skies' is almost Astaire's show. From the moment he dances nimbly through 'A Pretty Girl Is Like A Melody' you know that it will be hard for Bing to take the picture away from him. 'Puttin' On The Ritz' and 'Heat Wave' are the two highspots of the film. Bing, at times, is a deft scene stealer and he does weigh in with some impeccable vocals - particularly 'I'll See You In C. U. B. A', 'All By Myself' and the title song.

I've always thought that 'Everybody Step' - the one big production number in which Bing is featured - was meant to be bigger than it is. With its huge set, loads of extras and lots of dancers, the producers seemed to be setting the scene for something special that would rival the Astaire set-pieces. But the dancers do little more than wag their heads and the number ends with a most abrupt fade-out making the whole scene into a most expensive throw-away.

Bing makes 'Everybody Step'.

Billy De Wolfe's brief comedic moments are amusing in small doses but his marathon 'Mrs Murgatroyd' sketch is monumentally boring. But not to worry. Thanks to laser technology you can skip past it at the touch of a button and get on with the rest of the picture.

'Holiday Inn,' of course, is more Bing's picture than Fred's which, in a way, gives this double feature a nice sense of balance. Unlike 'Blue Skies', this film comes complete with the original theatrical trailer announcing '10 Bing Crosby vocals and 6 Fred Astaire dances'.

The gatefold sleeve is a real eye-catcher and the inside notes offer highly informative background stories on the two productions. If you're into laser, this is an essential purchase.

ROBIN AND THE 7 HOODS (Warner Home Video. Widescreen LaserDisc)

This star-studded spoof combining the spirit of the old Warner Brothers gangster films and the Robin Hood legend should have been better than it is. It might even have been a classic if the film's original director - Gene Kelly - had been at the helm.

In the 1970s, Sammy Cahn (who with Jimmy Van Heusen wrote the excellent songs) told me that the 1964 film underwent many changes during

production. Bing's part was originally written for Peter Lawford. But when Sinatra and Lawford fell out, Frank asked Bing to step in. At first, Bing declined but eventually acquiesced on condition that he could change the role from that of a flashily dressed mouthpiece to the rather threadbare character that inspired the song 'Style' and created one of the highspots of the film.

The script generally is not very good and Gordon Douglas was altogether the wrong director. The film seems to me to be about 15 minutes too long. Sinatra tends to look bored throughout and only hits his stride when singing 'My Kind Of Town'. And it's hard to understand why the makers elected to mix the soundtrack in mono. A stereo mix would have made all the difference to the music.

While it is no masterpiece, the film always looks good and this widescreen laserdisc captures the beautifully designed sets perfectly showing us just how wasted the film is on regular TV. Sinatra, Dean Martin and Sammy Davis, Jr are worthy of a place in any collection.

Ken Barnes

LETTER FROM LESLIE

Hello, members, may I once again say how I thoroughly enjoyed the last issue of our BING magazine. Splendidly produced once more and with entertaining reading, it will make a real keepsake for the membership.

At this point, may I thank the many members who sent me their Christmas cards and they were all very much appreciated. My apologies to all who sent me greetings and to whom I have not reciprocated, but to do so would be something of a task and in more ways than one. As one who has been a 'Bing plugger' for more than half-a-century, I have had a lot of contact with many people in the various branches of the media and many of these have to be catered for at Christmas time with messages of goodwill with the result that sadly something has to go. Incidentally, I had nice cards from Nancy Briggs and from Mozelle Seger who both used to work in the Crosby office and it was lovely to hear from them again. Another item I received was a Christmas card issued by the Toshiba Television Company for their reps to hand out to their customers and it showed a picture of Bing alongside 'Mr. Blue' (a Toshiba symbol) who is singing "Ba ba ba boom, I'm dreaming of a blue Christmas..."

Just before last Christmas, I had a surprise visit from a fellow islander who briefly knows of me and he explained that he had come into town with his wife and he was letting her get on with her shopping spree. He explained that he had heard on the radio, Bing's later versions of 'Please' and 'Temptation' but could I let him hear Bing's earlier recordings as he thought that they were the best. This reminded me of one day when Bing said to me "Do you know Leslie, it doesn't matter what I record there's always somebody who doesn't like this or that. You just have to go along and hope for the best." Bing was well aware of the different fads existing in people's make-ups.

This brings me to say that I have often been asked to name some of my favourites from Bing's later years and I usually start at the time of the release of the Bing and Buddy Cole album 'New Tricks'. Wonderful material from the CBS radio shows and a fine sound in their original mono form. Moving forward a few years, the Longines Symphonette Society tracks interest me although there are about four recordings where the voice is under recorded. Bing is however in fine form on tracks like 'Friendly Persuasion', 'All Alone', 'Ole Buttermilk Sky', 'Stormy Weather', 'I'll Take Romance' and 'When My Sugar Walks Down The Street'. The 'Holiday In Europe' album also offers good listening for me and you all probably know that these recordings were made with Bing adding his voice to pre-recorded orchestral tapes as indeed was the case with the Longines recordings. In a letter to me dated July 11, 1977, Bing said "I dislike very much recording with a track. I'd rather record with a live orchestra, but of course it's so much more economically feasible to do it with a track that they are inclined that way and I guess I have to go along with them."

A couple of real gems for me are 'The Second Time Around' and 'Incurably Romantic'. Lovely songs and beautifully sung with fine accompaniments and arrangements. In 1961 when 'The Road To Hong Kong' was being made and Bing, myself and Bob Hope were in the latter's dressing room, who should walk in but none other than the great songwriters Jimmy Van Heusen and Sammy Cahn who of course wrote the aforementioned songs. Bing introduced me to them and I thanked them for writing two fine songs for Bing to sing and they seemed pleased to have a compliment from an 'ordinary guy'.

Leslie with Bing on the set of 'The Road to Hong Kong'.

The London Decca recordings made for the 'Feels Good, Feels Right' album had a nice studio tonal sound about them and I really lapped up the tracks of 'The Way We Were' and 'Time On My Hands'. A most delightful track for me is the song 'I Love To Dance Like They Used To Dance' which Bing brought to the attention of producer Ken Barnes who in turn handed it over to the skills of arranger Pete Moore. The recording of 'I Couldn't Care Less' has me fascinated by Bing's phrasing of one word namely 'before' in 'where we walked before'. The January 28th. 1960 recording of 'The Music Of Home' from the Broadway production of 'Greenwillow' is good listening as well and I received it in the form of a gift of a 45 rpm single from RCA Records in the USA at the time of its release. The backing track was 'It's a Good Day'. There were four songs from this session and the tracks were only issued in Australia some seven years later as a result of the enterprise of some Australian Crosby collectors who approached a then new Manager of RCA to release all four tracks. I acquired seven of these EPs from Australia and I believe it was through David Currington who now acts as Australian representative for BING magazine. I sent one to Bing and in his letter to me of July 7, 1967 he wrote

"Thanks for sending me the RCA record containing the new songs which I had forgotten all about and which you tell me have only been released in Australia previously. I played them and you are quite right. They are rather good.

Your friend, Bing

The record contained four songs namely 'The Music of Home', 'It's a Good Day', 'Aloha Means I Love You' and 'The New Ashmolean Marching Society' with the accompaniment provided by the orchestra conducted by Bob Thompson. I gifted one of the records to the BBC Record Library and also one to the late Alan Dell.

I have been delighted to note from correspondence received that those among our membership who are able to regularly tune in on Sunday afternoons to the BBC's Radio Two 'Sounds Easy' broadcasts have been pleased with the weekly 'Crosby Corner' spots which were originally brought in by Alan Dell a decade ago. I am sure all of you share my disappointment with the planned withdrawal of the programme and I have written to James Moir, Controller, BBC Radio 2, London W1A 4WW registering my disapproval. Can I urge you all to write as well if you wish to see this programme continue. Incidentally, it was very nice of David Jacobs to mention my 75th. birthday in his 'Sounds Easy' broadcast on February 11th. and my thanks to whoever alerted him to the date.

Last January 6th. and on a very wet Saturday afternoon I was pleased to note that the video 'The Magic Of Bing Crosby' was being televised. Because of the inclement weather many people did not venture out and they obviously decided to stay in front of their television. I had a number of telephone calls from persons expressing their pleasure at having seen the broadcast and over the period of several days I was even stopped in the street by friends telling me their delight at seeing what Bing had to offer.

Now that I've reached 75, I'm having my leg pulled to the effect that I had better start spending the roughly £1000 which Bing gave me over the years as I won't be able to take it with me. I have however started to sort out the thousands of letters, newspaper write-ups etc. in order to tidy up here as well as giving me easier access to things. I have come across several interesting letters and one was from Ken Barnes about the re-mastering of 'Straight Down the Middle'. Bing apparently recorded the song in the Spring of 1957 with the Buddy Cole trio. The orchestra was added to that basic track on December 31st., 1957 so that the track could be issued as a commercial record. Bing sang the song on nation-wide TV on January 12, 1958 as part of a show coming from his Bing Crosby National Pro-am Golf Tournament at Pebble Beach and the record enjoyed steady sales over the years. Twenty years later, Ken Barnes and his partner at that time, Chris Harding, did a deal for 73 tracks of Bing and the Buddy Cole trio of which 'Straight Down the Middle' was one of the titles. This differed from the other 72

tracks in that Bing was isolated from the track that carried the Buddy Cole trio. The reason for this may have been because they were planning to add an orchestra at a later date. The original routine was so locked into the shape of the subsequent arrangement that it was decided to duplicate it at least as far as the eight brass and five saxes were concerned. In order to make it different from its original release and easily distinguishable however, the orchestration was shortened and a full string section was added plus a new rhythm section featuring electric piano, two guitars and conga drums. In its original form, it is 100% safe to suggest that the other golfing song 'Tomorrow's My Lucky Day' was also recorded by Bing on a separate track to that of the Buddy Cole trio but the track was missing from the material inspected by Ken Barnes.

Another letter I came across was from Gary Giddins which states that his research shows that the grandparents Bing had thought had come from Ireland had in fact come from New Brunswick in Canada. Gary's research is certainly very thorough and I am looking to his new book with eager anticipation.

Before closing with this 'write-up' I would like to revert to my comments relating to some of Bing's later recordings and I really must say how pleasurable it was being in the control booth at CBS Studios, London on September 12, 1977 for the recording of the 'Seasons' album songs. The first song to be recorded was 'September Song' and Bing's portrayal of the verse is a moment I shall always remember. The atmosphere of the actual studio made it magical!

Leslie Gaylor

BING IN THE USA

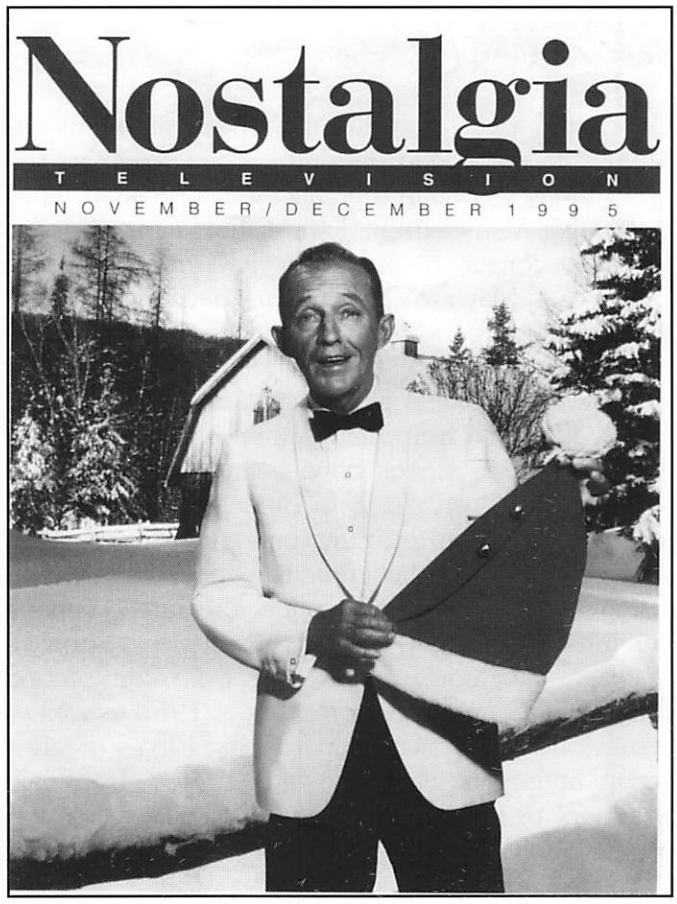
Wig Wiggins gives us his Stateside update

Christmas 1995

A brief mention of the excellent television coverage of Bing's films last Christmas. The Disney Channel showed 'A Bing Crosby Christmas Like The Ones We Used to Know' which repeated an hour-long special from 1979 hosted by Kathryn Crosby and Gene Kelly, featuring a compilation of clips from the 13 original Crosby Christmas specials that aired from 1962 until 1977. And for the second year, the American Movie Classics channel devoted all of their Christmas Day to Bing's films as 'Christmas With Bing'. The sequence of the films shown was as follows:

6 a.m. (Christmas Morning) Little Boy Lost
Going My Way
Road To Singapore
Road To Zanzibar
Road To Morocco
Road To Utopia
Holiday Inn
Blue Skies
High Time
Say One For Me
Just For You
The Emperor Waltz
A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court
5.15 a.m. (Boxing Day) Mr. Music

Most of these films were shown by AMC at other times during December as well. The AMC magazine also featured Bing on the cover as did Nostalgia Television magazine for December.



Kathryn Crosby in 'State Fair'

In BING 111, I mentioned the new production of the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical 'State Fair' which is on tour en route for Broadway staring John Davidson, Donna McKecknie, Andrea McArdle and Kathryn Crosby herself. The production returned to the Washington DC area in January (during the terrible weather) for a 'limited engagement prior to Broadway' at the Kennedy Center. The newspaper reviews were quite favorable this time although no specific mention was made of Kathryn.

Bing's new Irish CD from MCA

I have had the great pleasure of working with fellow ICC member Andy McKaie at MCA on their new 'Irish' CD, which amalgamates Bing's two old MCA Irish LPs and should be in the stores before St. Patrick's Day. In addition to writing the liner notes, and suggesting a full booklet rather than just a single-sheet insert, I must also modestly take credit for eliminating 'Tobermory Bay' and having the first version of 'Too-Ra-Loo-Ra-Loo-Ral' resurrected after fifty two years, as well as the inclusion of full discographical data. Andy tells me that MCA plan a Bing-Andrews Sisters package in time for Christmas 1996 and I will be following up with him on that.

Festival Films Videos

Over the past six months, Festival Films of Minnesota has begun offering Crosby collectors the opportunity to obtain a unique series of video tapes containing many extremely rare short films from the fabulous collection of fellow ICC member Bob DeFlores. Many of these films have never been available before, in any format, and each one is being reproduced by Festival Films to the highest possible professional standards, and in much finer quality than that from many other video companies. Thus far, three videos have been released in this series: "On The Road With Bing And Bob" (which includes several previously unknown shorts from World War II and the immediate post-war period), "Bing At Sennett" (which offers the rare complete version of "Dream House") and a "Surprise Package" (featuring an excerpt from the second Bing-Perry Como television show of 1960 as well as a previously unknown short starring Bing's greatest record and radio rival of the early 1930s). Ron Hall, President of Festival Films and also a Bing admirer and fellow ICC member, has told me that they plan to release additional videos during 1996 containing other much-sought-after items from the Bob DeFlores collection, such as the complete Sennett short "One More Chance" and the rare Paramount short "Please" (they are still looking for Paramount's 'lost' short, "Just An Echo"). Much depends on the success of their first three videos, so ICC members are encouraged to support Festival's Bing series to the maximum extent possible to help assure that there will be an opportunity for all of us to add more priceless films to our video collections during the coming months. In the meanwhile, our sincerest thanks to Ron Hall and Bob DeFlores for all that they are doing for Crosby collectors, and for Bing, through their personal interest and efforts.

Nostalgia Television Programs

In June 1958, Bing signed a $2 million contract with the ABC television network to star in two hour-long musical variety programs each year for the next five years, and also to produce ten additional programs in which he would not appear personally. After the first of Bing's own shows was telecast on October 1, 1958, TIME magazine reported that Bing had shown, once again, that he "was a master entertainer", that his "top-notch ABC special had swayed along with rocking-chair ease", and that "its sparse (but expensive) sets and casual tone made the usual frenetic TV variety shows look sick by comparison".

Thanks to the Nostalgia Television cable network in the USA, we have recently been able to enjoy seeing seven of these ABC programs again, after a lapse of more than 30 years. And for many of Bing's old and new fans (including myself), this has been a unique opportunity to see - for the first time - a real treasure-trove of his earliest television performances from a period in his career when Bing was still at the height of his performing capabilities. Originally telecast between March 1959 and December 1962, when Bing was aged from 56 to 59, these shows were produced at the same time he was also making such feature films as 'Say One For Me', 'High Time' and 'The Road To Hong Kong'.

Viewing these television specials from today's' perspective, as I have just done, caused a number of things to stand out. Most significant is how 'young' everyone looks - including Bing - but especially all of his female co-stars, contrasted with my previous mental picture of them. Also as TIME stated, the sets are indeed extremely simple compared with those we see today, usually consisting of only a few thin drop curtains and very limited props, with the performers normally either just standing before the camera or sitting on chairs, benches, or stools. Even the occasional change-of-pace dance numbers are very limited in concept and execution by current standards. And since all but the last of these seven programs are from the black-and-white days of television, even the costumes of the various

performers are generally subdued and relatively unobtrusive. Nevertheless, all of Bing's specials were considered to be first-class television entertainment when they were produced and in my opinion they still are. They stand up extremely well in 1996, and they definitely are not just museum pieces for Crosby collectors.

More important for me, Bing's voice was strong, excellently miked and effectively recorded (often in advance, for his solo numbers) during these programs. Bing also blended extremely well with almost all of his fellow performers during the inevitable 'medleys' that were a regular feature of these and similar television variety shows of that era. Only occasionally did Bing's voice reveal any of the strains, particularly in the upper register, that he suffered from during the later years of his career. And finally, Bing clearly appeared to be enjoying himself thoroughly during these programs, and to be having a great time appearing with his many guest artists. If anyone could be said to be performing a 'labor of love' on these special shows, it was Bing himself, despite his frequently-stated aversion during the early 1950s to ever appearing on television at all!

As promised in BING 111, my more specific comments about each of these seven ABC programs will follow, written as I have watched them for the first time ever over the past seven months. The first three programs will be reviewed in this edition of the magazine with the remainder appearing in BING 113. For those ICC members who saw the programs originally so many years ago, I hope that my reactions will bring back pleasant memories of Bing's many contributions to a long-lost era of television entertainment. No, they definitely do not make them like this any more - but "thanks Bing" - for a job well done, as always, in your own inimitable style. It has been a great experience to see you in action again.

Program One

The Bing Crosby Show for Oldsmobile (March 2, 1959)
With Jo Stafford, James Garner, Dennis and Philip Crosby and Nelson Riddle's orchestra.
(Special guest spot by Dean Martin)

The program opened with Bing on stage alone, singing a parody version of 'Love Won't Let You Get Away' to introduce his guests: Jo Stafford, James Garner (TV's 'Maverick') and the Crosby twins, Dennis and Philip. The stage settings were deceptively simple throughout the show, with changing stacks and shapes of lumber as the only props before a plain backdrop curtain, and Dennis and Philip acting as on-camera stage hands to rearrange various pieces of lumber to fit the different songs and dialogue as the program progressed.

Bing's first solo, 'Ol' Man River', followed in the up-tempo Buddy Cole arrangement that he had used previously on radio and records. Bing really appeared to enjoy singing this song, which featured excellent, close-up camera work.

Jo Stafford, who looked gorgeous throughout the show (and with absolutely no hint of the overweight problems that plagued her periodically during her career), next sang a beautiful version of one of her own hits, 'I'll Be Seeing You'.

James Garner then joined Bing in what could be labelled a comedy sketch, as they discussed their various activities and interests, culminating in Bing asking if Jim was familiar with the way in which Dean Martin sang. "Well, that's the way I used to sing!," Bing laughed. This led to a brief, unannounced walk-on by Dean Martin, who proceeded — at Bing's insistence — to demonstrate his own style on 'It's Easy To Remember' before leaving.

This was followed by a walking, quasi-dancing (and singing) version of 'Hooray For Love' by Bing, Jo Stafford and James Garner, during which 'Maverick' did a creditable job of holding his own (his singing was at least as good as Bing's and Jo's dancing).

The mood of the show then changed for a dance number by Tom Hanson and Thelma Tadlock performed to 'Way Down Yonder in New Orleans', which was spirited but not particularly original.

Next came the highlight of the program, a 'Medley For Travelling' by Bing and Jo Stafford, which featured many of the songs from Bing's and Rosemary Clooney's 'Fancy Meeting You Here' LP album, including 'On A Slow Boat To China', 'I Can't Get Started', 'Hindustan', 'It Happened In Monterey' and 'You Came A Long Way From St. Louis'. Bing and Jo were excellent together in this lengthy duet, as they moved rather nimbly in and around various piles and stacks of lumber, aided by Dennis and Philip.

Bing then appeared, standing alone, to sing a moving version of 'Twilight On The Trail' which, however, was marred by a surprisingly poor effort on his part at lip-synching to an obviously pre-recorded tape. (Bing usually was excellent at lip-synching, but not this time).

Then, as the program appeared to be ending, Bing was joined by Dennis and Philip at center-stage and 'kidded' into a brief rendition by the three of them of the Mills Brothers' hit recording of 'The Jones Boy' against a rock-and-roll beat, as the final credits began to roll.

Program Two

The Bing Crosby Show for Oldsmobile (September 29, 1959)

With Frank Sinatra, Peggy Lee, Louis Armstrong, Joe Bushkin, George Shearing, Paul Williams and Axel Stordahl's orchestra

The show opened with a parody of 'I'm Glad I'm Not Young Anymore' sung, in turn, by Bing, Frank Sinatra, Peggy Lee and Louis Armstrong on a largely bare stage with a 'glass' motif, with the men in tuxedos and Peggy in a long white dress. The number seemed a little stiff and the 'humorous' lyrics rather less than hilarious.

Frank Sinatra, who was billed as a 'special guest', then sang a slow, almost mournful version of 'Willow Weep For Me' while walking around the stage and smoking a cigarette, with wind chimes as the major prop. Clearly, Frank could, and should, have chosen a less moody song from his vast repertoire for television.

This was followed by a breathy, up-beat version of 'Baubles, Bangles and Beads', by Peggy Lee, standing inside the suggestion of a glass 'ice house'. Visually it was a great number, but the arrangement did not fit Peggy's vocal style very well.

As a definite break in the previous mood of the show, Bing and Frank appeared, seated together in two clear plastic chairs, and spent entirely too much time engaged in a supposedly-spontaneous (and humorous) discussion of various topics, including Frank's physique, their houses at Palm Springs, and their many house guests, which was more draggy than funny and often clearly forced.

Bing and Frank finally were rescued by Peggy Lee joining them, and the three then walked over to three white pianos arranged in line where Paul Williams, George Shearing and Joe Bushkin were busily pounding out a jazzy version of 'I Love a Piano'. All six then eased into a bright, bouncy medley —beginning with 'Lullaby of Birdland' by Peggy Lee and George Shearing, followed by Frank Sinatra and Paul Williams doing 'The One I Love (Belongs To Somebody Else)' and then Bing and Joe Bushkin with a hard-driving version of 'Where The Blue Of the Night' — before finishing with another snatch of 'I Love a Piano' from the three pianists and the full orchestra. Definitely a welcome, and needed, change-of-pace from the first part of the show.

Louis Armstrong then appeared alone for one of his patented songs, 'Mack the Knife', which was followed by a less-than inspired 'Beatnik Cinderella' dance number performed by Jayne Turner and five other dancers. This segued into Bing and Peggy Lee seated at a small outdoor table, singing 'Too Neat to be a Beatnik' (a most forgettable song) while the dancers continued in the background.

Fortunately, this interlude was saved by Bing moving to join Satchmo to perform a more familiar medley of 'Basin Street Blues', 'Everybody Loves My Baby', 'Lazy Bones' and 'Them There Eyes'. Without a pause in the backing music, Peggy Lee came forward to sing an excellent version of 'Some of These Days', and then Frank Sinatra closed with 'If I Could Be With You (One Hour Tonight)'.

With the four stars still standing at center stage (and after what obviously had been a 'commercial break'), Frank and Peggy continued with a duet of 'Lazy River', and then Bing and Peggy sang a spirited version of the Dixieland classic, 'High Society', after which Louis Armstrong mugged through his old theme song, 'When It's Sleepy Time Down South'.

The closing number began with Bing and Louis

doing their familiar duet on 'Now You Has Jazz', joined after the first chorus by Frank and Peggy for the finish, and Bing's final remark of "and, that's the show" (instead of "and that's jazz") over the credits.

Two solos by Bing that were listed in TV GUIDE ('Rose Coloured Glasses' and 'Thank Heaven for Little Girls') were not shown. The first was cut by the Nostalgia Television editing process whilst the second was not used when the show was originally transmitted in 1959, so Bing did not have any solo numbers on this version of his own television special!

Program Three

The Bing Crosby Show for Oldsmobile (February 29, 1960)

With Perry Como, Dennis, Philip and Lindsay Crosby, Elaine Dunn, Sandy Stewart and Vic Schoen's orchestra

This first of Bing's two legendary television appearances with Perry Como in 1960 featured an almost bare stage, with only occasional lighting changes and extremely simple props to vary the mood of what essentially was a casual sing-a-long between the two of them for most of the hour. Bing used 'Sing, Sing, Sing' as the opening number to introduce Perry and his three sons, and then moved easily into a brief duet with Perry on 'Zing a Little Zong'.

Perry then asked Bing where the stools were, so they could sit and relax while performing, but Bing joked that they could only provide subway strap hangers instead. Accordingly, a pair of straps then dropped down into camera range, and Bing and Perry proceeded to hold on to them and 'casual' their way though a 'Lazy Medley', including 'Lazy', 'Gone Fishin'' and 'Lazy Afternoon', before changing tempo to 'some jazzy stuff' and finishing with 'Hoop-de-do'.

After a commercial break, Bing and Perry spent a little more casual time seated on adjoining park benches where they introduced, through a 'Getting To Know You' segment, two other young performers, singer Sandy Stewart and dancer-singer Elaine Dunn. Beginning again with 'Sing, Sing, Sing', the four then sang portions of 'Dream Along With Me', 'Where the Blue of the Night', 'Catch a Falling Star', 'Swinging on a Star', 'Pennies From Heaven' and 'Poppa Loves Mambo' before concluding with a snatch of 'A Couple of Song and Dance Men' by Bing and Perry (I'm the song' — and 'I'm the song' they claimed).

For a complete change of pace, Sandy Stewart was then featured in a solo version of 'Bye, Bye, Blackbird', which was performed at a dreadfully slow tempo that resulted in a very poor number, despite her excellent singing voice.

Following this, the three Crosby brothers sang a fine medley of 'Scarlet Ribbons' (with Dennis taking the lead) and 'Fox Went A-Hunting' before moving into a spirited version of 'Joshua Fit de Battle of Jericho', during which they were joined by Papa Bing. The three boys were surprisingly good, displaying excellent harmony and a relaxed stage presence (I wonder where that came from?).

The 'four Crosbys' then moved out into a delightful, walking soft shoe shuffle dance routine which Bing called 'early Shirley Temple' or 'late George Raft', that all four seemed to have a lot of fun performing. If not quite up to Bing's dances with Fred Astaire, it still was an impressive demonstration of live hoofing, without apparent retakes, by the quartet.

Elaine Dunn appeared next to sing and dance to a rock-and-roll version of 'There's a Boat Dat's Leavin' Soon for New York', which was energetic, if not particularly enthralling.

And then, for the pinnacle of the program, Bing and Perry's long medley which supposedly was the first half of 'making an LP album together'. At last seated on two of Perry's familiar TV-style stools, the two worked their way easily and happily through some 20 songs together, against a series of steady riffs from the orchestra, before ending with a portion of 'Two Sleepy People' (or 'singers', as they sang) and a final, smiling quip from Perry — "and that's jazz"! This was a true tour-de-force, which fully demonstrated the remarkable similarity of style and the mutual respect and enjoyment that Bing and Perry shared about working together in such manner.

As the credits rolled, Bing and Perry listened to a 'playback' of the first few songs from their medley and discussed making the 'second half of the LP album' on Perry's television show a few weeks hence. This was a unique hour in television history, completely relaxed and destined to be unforgettable and irreplaceable.

One unfortunate loss in the editing of this program by Nostalgia Television was a five-minute medley by Bing and Perry of a group of Maurice Chevalier songs during the first half of the show. We have long had the audio version of this medley on a Broadway LP album, but it would have been nice to have seen the video version as well.

More reviews next time.

Wig Wiggins

BING ON THE INTERNET

It is clear that increasingly the Internet and e-mail are going to play a part in our everyday lives and whilst many members will be perfectly happy with 78s and will not want to change in any way, it is the duty of the Editorial team to reflect the changing scene as it affects Bing. Frans Van der Kolff gives us an introduction to this exciting new world.

The last decade or so brought us several new developments which are having a big impact on the availability, and the collecting, of the music and films of Bing Crosby. For most of us new media like video, compact disc and even laserdisc don't need much of an introduction anymore. However, there's one medium of which the 'Crosby potential' thus far hasn't been noticed, at least not in a wider circle. That new medium is Internet, the world's largest computer network.

I doubt that, when personal computers became common some years ago, many among us would have foreseen this would open up a whole new area of Crosbyana. Yet, it's a fact that today Internet contains many references to Bing. What has caused this development? When personal computers came around, within a few years many people had one at home or in the office: a nice word processor for writing letters, a little help doing budget planning, some exciting computer games, and that was that. But when you connect computers to each other, in a network like Internet, something new happens. I'm leaving out all the technical details now, as BING is not the place for that. Take it from me though that once connected, you have easy access to an almost indescribable wealth of information. You can look for information on almost any subject you can think of - it's there, from Bob Hope to Michael Jackson, from Old Time Radio to High Energy Physics. You can also use a different kind of resource: a world-wide supply of knowledgeable people, some of whom are certain to share your interests, no matter how obscure. It's easy to find a so called 'Discussion Group' on almost any topic.

As a recent Internet-user, I'd like to invite you to join me on my discovery trip to digital Crosbyana. Let's take a look at some of the many unexpected and never-thought-of relations that seem to exist between Bing and a host of subjects.

THE BING CROSBY HOME PAGE

A home page is the common name on Internet for the first 'page' of an information site, as in our case about Bing and his career. I was quite surprised to find such a site devoted to Bing, until now unknown to me, and I guess to most other members. It contains a biography, discography and filmography, and links to other sites which have references to Bing in one way or another. This site, partly still under construction, was made in the US by Shaun Lippy, who promotes his site as follows:

"In the liner notes to his recent release of material made famous by Bing Crosby in his Paramount pictures, Mel Torme mentions that Bing has become 'the forgotten man' in popular music. Mr Torme considers this to be patently unfair, and I quite agree with him. That's why I've decided to launch this Bing Crosby Home Page on the world wide web - I want to do my part to ensure that the talents of one of the twentieth century's greatest performers do not become entirely forgotten.".

Shaun Lippy, who is in his early twenties, continues with his personal discovery of Bing.

"Only three short years ago. I'll never forget the first time I heard his voice - it was round Christmas time, 1992. A female friend of mine had suggested that we rent 'White Christmas' for the evening's home viewing. I should mention that I had been a big jazz fan for several years - Charlie Parker, Bud Powell, and the other bebop giants were my favourites. Well, I was very sceptical at the suggestion of a Bing Crosby flick - after all, I always thought of him as a 'square'; can you imagine that? At any rate, we rented the film and I reluctantly sat down to what I thought would be a wasted evening. Well, I can't even begin to describe the amazement that overcame me when I heard old Bing open up those priceless, platinum windpipes of his.... like millions of others before me, I had discovered the best, and I was immediately hooked."

One of the other links in this site is to the large and comprehensive Internet Movie Database, which, as I found out, gives details of most of Bing's films.

RECORDS AND VIDEO

Many shops or record companies offer their catalogues on Internet. I found such digital catalogues have several extras as compared with printed ones. Searching the catalogue for an artist's name or song title is work of only seconds. As Internet can also contain sound and video, it is possible to listen to or see parts of the recordings just by pushing a button. You can view pictures of CD sleeves, sometimes read reviews. These can be written by the record companies, but it's also possible to write a review yourself, promote your favourite artists, should you wish to do so. You can also see how many times people have looked for

certain CDs or tapes. Several sites offer information about new releases, world-wide. I found information on most of Bing's recent CD and video releases, and even some Bing-related releases which have not yet been mentioned in the Crosby magazine. (I have passed details of these to Jim Reilly who will be mentioning them in his 'Keeping Track' article)

Everything can be ordered and paid for (by credit card) on line. An interesting video site is 'Don't touch that dial', "your complete on-line resource for finding classic television shows available on pre-recorded video cassettes. Our goal is to provide the best possible collection of classic and modern television shows from many different studios and make them available to the general public." They have a large collection, among which I found the following Bing items:

* The Edsel show.
* Bing Crosby in a commercial 'for the gas company'.
* The Bing Crosby Show (with Jack Benny, 1954).
* The Jack Benny shows with a spoof of the 'Road' films and a vaudeville act that teams Jack Benny with George Burns and Bing Crosby from the mid-fifties.
* and last but not least the 17th annual Bing Crosby Pro-Am from around 1958, "this show is incomplete but a rare historical find."

Unfortunately, the only address shown is an e-mail address.....

MUSIC EXCHANGE

I was surprised to find several ads on the net from people looking for Bing's recordings. I wonder what the response will be at a time when not many Crosby collectors will have access to Internet?

BOOKS

Internet is also used as a medium for book advertising. I found information about the new edition of 'Call Me Lucky', with a picture of the front page, reviews and comments of Will Friedland, Gary Giddins and Bing himself plus a listing of the contents. Of course you can order this on line too. 'Glenn Miller and his Orchestra' by George T Simon has an introduction by Bing Crosby. Only one line is given, stating that Bing thinks the book "should be the definitive work on Glenn Miller and his times". ' Sentimental Journey' - a commercial for a new book by Will Friedman. "The vocalists as stars from 1941 to 1945 are recorded in words and music ... This detailed book and full-length compact disc together provide a nostalgic look at the songs, singers, and bands of the World War II era. Selections from the CD include ... 'I'll Be Seeing You', by Bing Crosby. Download a soundfile to hear a short clip of his incredible voice".

THE BING CROSBY COLLECTION

Another site with information about Bing is at Gonzaga University. The Bing Crosby Collection gives information about the largest public Crosby collection and lists the holdings of a number of Crosby magazines. It seems they have a large collection, with issues of not only the current magazines, but also Bingville News, The Crooner, Crosby Chronicles, The Crosby Voice, the bulletins of the Bing Crosby Photoclub, the Kathryn Crosby Fanclub and the Southampton Bing Crosby Club. They have an almost complete collection of Bingang, dating back to 1939. Nice pictures in this site, of Bing and his Oscar for 'Going My Way'. One page is reproduced here. The Internet address is:- http://www.gonzaga.edu/foley/speccoll.html or e-mail to edwards@foley.gonzaga.edu.

BING CROSBY COLLECTION

Harry Lillis "Bing" Crosby graduated from Gonzaga High School in 1920 and received an honorary doctorate from Gonzaga University in 1937. Bing retained an interest and affection for his alma mater throughout his life. He contributed to the Library building, which was dedicated as a memorial to the Crosby family in 1957. Since the 1950s Gonzaga has received donations of Bing Crosby material from Bing, his family, friends and fans. Some of his memorabilia is on display for public viewing in the Crosbyana Room in the Crosby Student Center, the former Crosby Library. The Collection is the largest public Crosby Collection containing his Oscar he won in 1944 for "Going My Way," gold and platinum records, trophies and awards, photographs, correspondence, newsclippings, radio disks, records, and other memorabilia.

The holdings for the book collection are available on the on-line catalog **FOLIO**. The inventory to the Bing Crosby Collection is being processed. Please contact the Special Collections Department for more information.

Dreaming of a White Christmas

An interesting citation about 'White Christmas' comes from the 'Chart history of songs written by Irving Berlin' on Internet, written by Tony Hill, with reference to Joel Whitburn's books. "Crosby's recording was at number one for a total of 14 weeks (11 weeks initially in 1942, two weeks in 1945, and one week during the 1946 Christmas season) and on the chart for an amazing 85 weeks over the years." Further on Mr. Hill tells us that "the Holiday Inn soundtrack album was released in 1942 followed by Crosby's Merry Christmas album and had the Billboard pop album chart existed then, those albums would have certainly been number one. As it was, Merry Christmas reached number one in eight years and held a number one for a total of 37 weeks. If we can interpolate from the 1942-44 Christmas seasons when the album chart didn't exist, it is reasonable to believe the album would have been number one for at least 60 weeks from 1942-1957." Mr. Hill concludes with the remark that "the film which in itself was conceived by Berlin, lent its name to a chain of motels." Note that Mr. Hill uses the term 'soundtrack album' loosely, as Bing's release is of course not from the soundtrack but consists of the commercial Decca recordings of the film's songs on 78s which were released as an album.
The address of the site is:
http://www.umn.edu/nlhome/m042/hill0256/berlin.

Front Royal

From the electronic City Guide of Front Royal comes the following information, which partly complements what has been written about Bing's involvement with this town in recent issues of BING. "The impetus for establishing a park system for Front Royal began with the Front Royal / Warren County Recreation Association in 1948. Their first project was to construct a major ball field. Bing Crosby, at the request of Senator Raymond Guest Sr., came to Front Royal in 1948 to help kick off the fund raising campaign. At that time, Mr. Crosby made a $1000 contribution to start the project. Mr. Crosby returned in 1950 to premier his movie 'Riding High' and donated another $3,572.92 to complete the $10,000 fund raising goal. Because of his support, the stadium was named in his honor." And not only that, Front Royal has a Bing Crosby road too! The
The address of the site is:
http://www.boondox.org/froyal4.html.

Bing's psychic experience

The following quote comes from an article on Internet by Robert Kandall about psychic experiences of Hollywood's classic stars. "Bing Crosby, the famous crooner, had one psychic experience he never forgot. One balmy Sunday afternoon as Bing listened to a Frank Sinatra record on the stereo, the music came to a sudden halt and he began hearing a completely different voice speaking to him. Crosby recalled that it was an impressive-sounding deep voice that said: "I don't think you should do that. It won't turn out well." Then the mysterious voice stopped abruptly and the Sinatra record finished playing. Crosby admitted that this psychic experience unnerved him. He tried every way he knew to explain it, but he could not, since his stereo record player was strictly a phonograph. It had no antenna that could have picked up freak radio signals. The experience never repeated itself, for which Crosby was glad." Well - what do we think about that? I've never heard that story before.

****

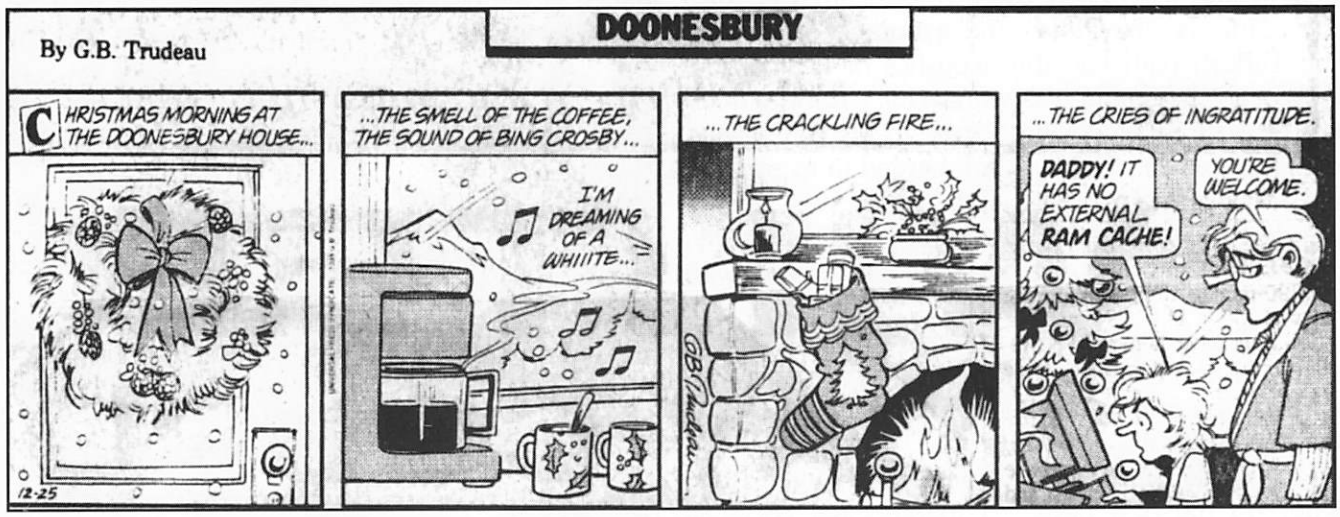
"Do You Need A Pianist for a party, a wedding, a function? A temporary substitute for a regular pianist on holidays? Everything from the Beatles to Bing Crosby". Thus starts one of many references to Bing. I came across Bing's name in weather forecasts and events calendars - did you know about the regular fairs held at Bing Crosby Hall? You can find it at 2260 Jimmy Durante Blvd., Del Mar. His name pops up in a database of famous married couples, TV station's listings, other people's biographies, news bulletins and short stories. Same goes for pictures - there's a photo gallery of the 'CBS Golden Age of Radio Stars' which starts with a nice picture of Bing and Al Jolson from one of the Chesterfield shows. Sound excerpts of Bing's music can be found in numerous reviews of popular music and in record catalogues. Bing's name is mentioned in quizzes, and even during a long discussion concerning flag desecration on the floor of the (US) House of Representatives in November 1995. To give you some idea of the number of these references; when you search Internet for Bing's name, you get 17,633 references on 'Bing' and 18519 on 'Crosby', while there are 8000 references which match both names. This article contains just a few highlights from just the first 200 references!

Frans Van der Kolff

(Editor: Thanks, Frans for a most interesting look into the mysteries of the Internet and clearly a lot of work went into the research. If I get on to the Internet at

some time, I shall have to set up a site for the ICC. There is no doubt that we shall be reading more about this subject in BING in the future. Since Frans prepared his article, we have forwarded a copy of BING 111 to Shaun Lippy so that he is aware of our existence and we hope that he will join us as a member. Shaun's Internet addressis http://www.cen.uiuc.edu/~h~lippy/binghome.html. and you can e-mail him at h-lippy@cs.uiuc.edu. Another 'Net' user is Festival Films who have recently issued a number of Bing videos. Their Internetaddressis http://members.aol.com/fesfilms/FFHome.html and they can be reached by e-mail at FesFilms@aol.com. You can obtain an up to date list of all their Bing videos on Internet.

With all this talk of technology, the cartoon reproduced below seems apposite.)


DOONESBURY
By G.B. Trudeau
CHRISTMAS MORNING AT THE DOONESBURY HOUSE...
...THE SMELL OF THE COFFEE, THE SOUND OF BING CROSBY...
I'M DREAMING OF A WHIIITE...
...THE CRACKLING FIRE...
...THE CRIES OF INGRATITUDE.
DADDY! IT HAS NO EXTERNAL RAM CACHE!
YOU'RE WELCOME.
12-25

I've Seen Them All Naked

This rather eye-catching title is the name of a book by John Dempsey and published by Waterfront Publications of 463 Ashley Rd., Parkstone, Dorset, BH14 0AX in 1992. Price £6.95. John Dempsey was a masseur on the Queen Mary and Queen Elizabeth liners in the fifties and sixties and his book tells of his experiences with the many famous personalities who passed under his hands. We pick up the story in Chapter 8 which is headed 'Bing Crosby, Bermuda and the President'.

...It was a day I would never forget. The 'phone rang and I grabbed the receiver and the appointment book. I instantly recognised the distinctive husky voice of Bing Crosby at the other end. He asked for a steam bath and massage. Could we fit him in? We would have moved heaven and earth to fit him in! Rather stupidly I asked who was calling. "Bing Crosby here," came back the reply. He then said that he would like a bath and massage with no other passengers around and that he would like to stay for several hours. Now that really was a problem. He wanted to come in the late afternoon so we made a few telephone calls to change some booked appointments, which wasn't easy.

Bing was due to arrive at 4.30. Can you imagine the excitement! I was about to meet the man who had been my favourite singer for more than 30 years. I had avidly collected his records and been to see almost every film. I hovered around the entrance until he arrived. I had carried a picture of him in my mind since before I went to sea in 1934 and I was surprised to find that he wasn't very tall.

"What's the procedure, boy?" he drawled in his deep husky voice.

I ushered him to a cubicle at the far end of the bath, took his dressing-gown and handed him a towel. As I led him through to the Turkish bath he noticed our beer on the telephone table.

"Is that part of the treatment down here?" He asked.

"We get very dry in here and we find beer more suitable than the water we give our passengers but you can have one if you like."

"OK., it's my shout," he said. "Order a few and I'll try one."

Tommy scrambled to get into his clothes and dash to the bar. Like me, he didn't want to miss anything.

We settled Bing in the first room of the Turkish bath known as the Tepiderium, the one which is not so hot. Within minutes the beer arrived and Tommy took a pint over to him. Over the next quarter of an hour Bing progressed from room to room. The steam room was last - our guest emerged for his shower carrying an empty pint pot.

"You must have enjoyed that beer Sir."

"It wasn't bad but I prefer my beer to be ice cold. Have you tried our American beers?"

We all had, of course, but we preferred the English brews. We mentioned a few brands;

'Budweiser', 'Schlitz', 'Blue Ribbon' and 'Pabst'. Then Bing came out with this little verse: "She had Blue Ribbon in her hair, Schlitz in her pants Budweiser." They were not the lyrics we knew!

Bing started to hum and as he plunged into the shower he burst into song. "My name is McNamara...". The rest of the song consisted of rather colourful lyrics which only he knew but we all tried to join in. Then came 'Moonlight Becomes You', Now Is The Hour' and a number of others. The Turkish bath had the acoustics of a recording studio and the sound was wonderful. Tommy dried him off so that he could go back to his cubicle and relax for a while. Nobby Clark barged in to say that his lady instructress, Miss Pat Sands, was waiting outside to catch a glimpse of Bing and, hopefully, collect his autograph. I said I would have a word with him as he was about to leave.

"How about your massage, Mr. Crosby?"

"I don't want a slap and tickle or just a rub, my boy," he said. "I've had massage all around the world so go to it!"

While Bing was on the table I thought 'I had better do my best here!' I manipulated correctly following all the proper procedures which Arthur Mason had taught me. I didn't want Bing Crosby to tell everyone back in America that those limeys on the Queen Elizabeth are a bunch of rubbers.

We talked about different things including his forthcoming film plans but he seemed just as interested in his other business activities. These included the manufacture of various gimmicks like an ashtray with a button which activated a mechanism to draw the ash and butt inside, leaving a clean surface. He said that he had an investment in oil and I remember overhearing two passengers say, "I see Bing is on holiday in Canada." "Don't be silly'" came the reply, "He's not interested in holidays, he's looking for oil."

I asked, "Do you think Bob Hope will be making a trip with us? He may have been on the Queen Mary but we'd love to meet him here."

"Bob's too stingy to pay the fare. If a film company were to foot the bill he'd be over like a shot. He owes me money. We have side-bets at golf but he hates parting with his cash. He's got Sam Snead teaching him how to putt now!"

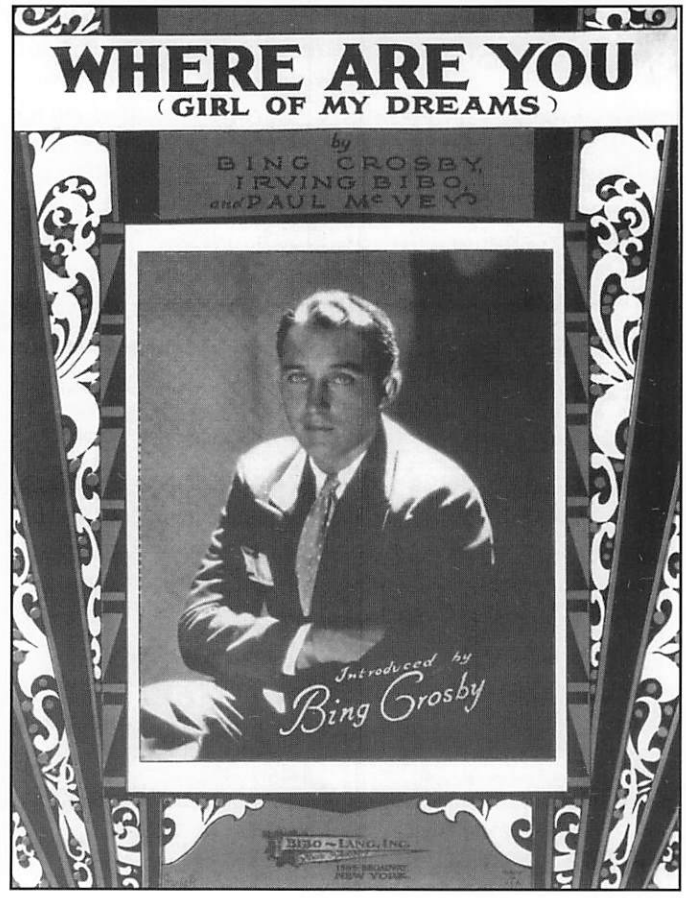
"I've collected some of your records and also Bob Hope singing 'Thanks For The Memory'."

"Sure, that's his type of song - he's getting on a bit now!"

Bing was about to leave and I mentioned the young lady outside who was waiting for his autograph.

"Sure, why not, lead me to her."

With just a towel wrapped around his waist we steered him through the side door where a very demure Pat Sands was waiting in her best costume.



Bing immediately burst into song, 'Where Are You?' Pat blushed and looked awkward. Passengers stopped swimming and stared at him as he signed her book with a flourish.

Of course, we all wanted autographed photos and it was arranged that I would pop up to his cabin later in the day to pick them up. I mentioned to him that I would be going to Bermuda to open a new Turkish bath and massage centre at the new Bermudian Hotel.

"It's a beautiful island, Dempsey. I wish you luck." He repeated this in his message on the photo.

The following day a steward arrived with a gift-wrapped bottle of champagne, Moet Chandon 1943. I still have the bottle, empty of course! This is one part of my life I will always remember....

(Editor: What a typical story of Bing's dealings with 'ordinary' people. He appears to have acted quite naturally in the laid back and relaxed way which became his trademark. So there's another book to add to the bibliography. The photo mentioned is reproduced in the book too.)

A Bing Crosby Tour?

In BING 106 (April, 1994), Gwen Harvey described a marvellous holiday with Starline Celebrity Tours and we have great pleasure in showing the advert for further tours later this year and next. Our member Clive Roberts is involved in Starline and I know that he would dearly love to arrange a special Bing Crosby tour if there were sufficient numbers. If you are interested, please contact Clive for further details. I notice that the Sinatra Music Society have a tour starting on September 28th. 1996 whilst the Doris Day Movie Tour is due to leave on October 14th. this year.

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TRADING POST

Entries are free for all items of Crosbyana and there is a nominal charge of £2 for non-Crosby advertisements. All items are printed in good faith and we cannot accept responsibility for any dissatisfaction arising from the transaction as a result of these entries

Please send all advertisements to the Editor

Richard Pearson, 2307 N. Trenton St., Arlington, VA 22207, USA

FOR SALE: Entire Bing Crosby LP collection consisting of over 200 albums. Please send £2 for list or send want list. Have most of Bing's Hollywood series, Jonzo, Spokane etc. Also have other popular singers' LPs for sale (Dino, Perry, Jolie etc.). Will accept English cheques or currency but prefer International Money Order in American $ or Travellers Cheques in American $.

Ragnar Uppman, Vackra Birgers vag 21, S-756 50 Uppsala, Sweden

WANTED
Daybreak DAS 402 (Single 45)
'Tie a Yellow Ribbon' / 'It's Not Where You Start'
Reprise RS 20645 (Single 45)
'Step To The Rear' / 'What Do We Do With The World?'

Ian Ridout, 18 Lorina Rd., Ramsgate, Kent, CT12 6DD (tel. 01843 595288)

"I have about 60 78s of Bing in varying conditions. If you know of anyone who would like them, they are free to anyone who cares to pick them up. All they would have to do is contact me as to when they would be calling."

Bill Ewert, Wood Nymph, 7 Elfin Drive, Ferndown, Dorset BH22 9QG

"I have the album which was released after his death of Johnny Mercer entitled 'An Evening With Johnny Mercer' in the series 'Lyrics and Lyricists' which were performed in 1971. I do know that one of the other lyricists featured was Yip Harburg as I believe also was Frank Loesser. Does anyone know the full list of those featured and does anyone have copies they could sell me?"

Contact Bill direct please.

Stan Woodford, 6 Mariam Gardens, Hornchurch, Essex RM12 6 QA

Stan has on offer many VHS video items and film song compilations of Bing that may be of interest. SAE for lists please.

John Marshall, 39 Kings Rd., Teddington, Middlesex TW11 0QD

As mentioned by Michael Crampton, John has filmed a most interesting 50 minute interview with Bing's nephew, Howard Crosby, and he is prepared to make this available to members on video for £5. Contact John direct.

Dag Vagsas, Moltke Moes Vei 7, 0851 Oslo, Norway (tel. 69 5300)

Dag offers a video of Bing's concert at Mysen in August 1977 in PAL format. The cost of VHS tape in Norway is very high and after allowing for heavy bank charges for changing foreign cheques and for postage and packing, Dag is obliged to ask £30 (or £23 if a blank video cassette is sent to him) for the video of this extraordinary show. After the finale of the actual show, the cameras kept rolling and the video includes the rare footage of Bing talking and singing to the audience as various presentations were made.

Please contact Dag direct and cheques should be made payable to Dag Vagsas

Festival Films, 6115 Chestnut Terrace, Shorewood, MN 55331, USA.

This is the firm which brought out the recent video ' On The Road with Bing and Bob'. That was their first PAL issue but they do have a good number of Bing's videos in NTSC format which cannot, of course, be played in the UK unless you have a VCR capable of playing both formats. Write for details.

Roger Addey, Swallowdale, 17 Tehidy Gardens, Camborne, Cornwall TR14 0ET

Wanted - a copy of 'Bing and Other Things' by Kathryn Crosby. Will pay reasonable price including postage. Tel 01209-718326

Greenwood Publishing Group, 3 Henrietta St., Covent Garden, London WC2E 8LU

Roger Osterholm's book 'Bing Crosby: A Bio-Bibliography' is still available from this firm for the discounted price of £37.50 (inc. p.& p.) Quote 'BING magazine special offer' when ordering.

John Bewick, 10 Prospect Rd., Shanklin, PO37 6AE (Tel. 01983 867078 after 6 p.m.)

FOR SALE
Unplayed boxed set 'The Very Best of Bing'
(This is the World Records 6 LP set together with bonus LP 'Bing and Friends')
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Ken Merry, 28 The Avenue, Bessacarr, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN4 5JX
TO SUSTAIN THE MEMORY OF ALAN DELL:- Cassettes of Alan's special programmes, i.e. tributes to Bing etc. Also an unbroken sequence of Alan's Crosby Corner from Spring 1985 until Spring 1986. Send SAE for further details.

The British Institute of Jazz Studies, 17 The Chase, Crowthorne, Berkshire RG45 6HT (tel. 01344 775669)

There was a good response to the advert in the last edition seeking back copies of BING magazine and the Institute only needs BING numbers 1 to 23 plus number 25 to complete its collection. Donations or offers for sale please to Graham Langley, Secretary, address and telephone number as above.

Geoff Block, 14 Lornes Close, Southend-on-Sea, Essex SS2 4PX

Geoff has mint copies of BING magazine from number 46 to 92. He will sell the lot for £20 with buyer collecting or paying postage.

G. D. Hamann Co. 2365 Scarff Street, Los Angeles, California 90007, USA

Following prompting from Wig Wiggins, Gary Hamann is working on a book about Bing which will be called 'Bing Crosby In The 30's' . Gary has produced 42 titles on different stars over the last two years by putting together verbatim day-by-day accounts of their lives in the 1930s as portrayed by the Los Angeles newspapers including movie reviews, gossip, scandal, interviews, publicity fluff and visits to film sets. The series includes books about Fred Astaire, Errol Flynn, James Cagney, Gary Cooper, Clark Gable, Jaenette MacDonald , Nelson Eddy and many others. The prices of the books vary depending on the amount of information about a particular star. Typically the price is $29.95 and write to Gary for full details of what is available. The Bing book is likely to have over **200** pages (A5 size) and the early draft makes fascinating reading and creates a wonderful image of the times and of Bing's busy life. It may be available by the time you read this and write to Gary for details. A review of the book will appear in the next BING.

Peter Burgis, PO Box 1660, Port Macquarie, NSW 2444, Australia (tel. (61) (065) 81 0576)

Peter has just re-joined us and he now trades as 'Kingfisher Cassettes' and offers new custom tapes of Australian radio broadcasts of the 1950s and 1960s. Much of the material is very rare and there are interviews with stars such as Frank Sinatra, Fred Astaire, Johnny Ray, Shirley Bassey, Pat Boone and Bill Haley. In the list I also noticed an Australian radio show starring Louis Armstrong and a live Australian concert from 1959 starring Frank Sinatra. Readers of BING may obtain lists of material from Peter free of charge upon request. Peter also runs vintage record auctions and please contact him if you want to receive lists. His February auction included a Capitol promotional record of Bing and Grace Kelly being interviewed about 'High Society'.
Ken Crossland, 9 Arden Drive, Dorridge, Solihull, B93 8LP (tel. 01564 730108)

BINGANG, the official magazine of the American Club Crosby, is published twice yearly and is available from Ken Crossland. Annual subscription £11. For free sample copy, write to Ken enclosing a 36p stamp.

Director Of Marketing, AD Box 100, Gonzaga University, Spokane, WA 99258-0001

Gonzaga University is pleased to offer the following gift and souvenir items bearing the Bing Crosby logo in recognition of its Bing Crosby Collection.

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Write direct for further details.

The Record Centre, 45-46 Loveday Street, Aston, Birmingham B4 6NR (tel. 0121 359 7399)

Mail order specialists stocking Bing and many nostalgic recordings as well as Jazz and Swing artists. Closed on Sundays and Mondays.

Back Copies of BING

Issues from nos. 93 to 111 (except 97,100, 105) are available for £2 each plus postage. Order from Michael Crampton, address on inside cover of magazine.

The Dean Martin Association, 259 London Rd., Croydon, Surrey CR0 2RL

For details of Dean Martin's only fully authorised international society, write to Bernard Thorpe at the address shown above. The subscription is £10 and the Association's newsletter "Just Dino" is published a minimum of 4 times a year, sometimes more.

The Sammy Davis Jr. Association, 6 Thyra Grove, North Finchley, London N12 8HB

We have a reciprocal arrangement with this Association. Please write to Paul Iacovou at the above address for details of the club.

The Judy Garland Club c/o Anthony R. Scarrott, Flat 3, 25 Holland Rd., Hove, East Sussex BN3 1JF

This club was founded in 1963 and their magazine 'Rainbow Review' is published 4 times a year. SAE to Anthony Scarrott for further details.

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Crosby Clubs Around The World

The ICC is pleased to be associated with the following Crosby Clubs. Please write to the addresses shown for further details.

Club Crosby, BINGANG
Mark Scrimger, President,
Wayne L. Martin, Editor
435 So. Holmes Ave., Kirkwood, Missouri 63122, USA
(Members in Europe should enrol via Ken Crossland, 9 Arden Drive, Dorridge, Solihull, B93 8LP)

BINGthings Society,
5021 57th. Avenue Court West, Tacoma, Washington 98467-4802, USA

Bing's Friends And Collectors Society,
Hobie and Cathie Wilson, 236 Andrieux St., Sonoma, California 95476-6909, USA

The Queensland Bing Crosby Society,
John Wright, 17 Thurecht Parade, Scarborough, Queensland 4020, Australia

The Victorian Bing Crosby Society
Bob Neate, 22 Pakenham St., Blackburn, Victoria, Australia 3130.

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The Bing Crosby Songography

For many years, Frans van der Kolff has been engaged in a labour of love. An alphabetical list of all the songs he could find which have been sung by Bing, together with a note of where and when. The 'Songography' is now ready and Frans explains the project more fully.

Discographies, filmographies and radio show directories have all been the subject of publications on numerous occasions in the past but to date, a Songography for Bing Crosby has not been previously attempted. For those not familiar with a Songography, I should explain that it is a complete alphabetical listing of every song Bing Crosby sang during his entire life. In every medium - radio, television, records, concerts, films etc.

Taking each title in turn, there follows a chronological listing of every date throughout Bing's life in which that title was sung. Against each date is given the medium in which it was performed, together with the master number (for records), the name or title of the programme (for film, radio and television) and the venue (for concerts). Also included is the accompaniment - vocal and orchestra.

Compiling this Songography has taken eleven years and much help from other collectors has been received, especially from Colin Pugh - without his help there would not be a publication today. Every once in a while, new material of Bing is discovered: items long hidden in collections come to light. No reference book of this magnitude will ever be complete. While every effort has been made to achieve a complete and accurate listing, no doubt there will be future additions and amendments. With the publication of Bing's Songography, whilst it will not tell you which titles are still available or have been posthumously mastered (an ongoing enterprise), at least it presents you with the full scope and potential. We hope it will serve as a reference book for the many facets of our hobby and collection.

The book, comprising about 12000 references on 500 pages, in a ring binder, is now available. Order from Frans van der Kolff, Billitonlaan 30, 7314 CP Apeldoorn, The Netherlands. Price is £25 or $38 which includes postage (sea mail) and packing. Please enclose the amount by International Money Order or in cash with your order. No cheques please, as international money transfer is either too costly or does not work. Please allow an extra four weeks for delivery, as the number of copies of the Songography will be produced according to demand.

This project is not a commercial enterprise and no profit is being made from it.

Frans van der Kolff

(Editor: With the Trades Description Act in mind, I must stress that this is a complete list of every song that Frans could trace. We do not have details of every song Bing sang on radio, the stage and at troop shows but this is the most complete listing yet and it is a fascinating publication to dip into.)

KEITH PARKINSON'S CELLULOID CROSBY

DEAN MARTIN (1919-1995)

Dean Martin died on Christmas Day at the age of 78 from acute respiratory failure. In his peak years as an entertainer, from the early fifties to the late sixties, he was a force to be reckoned with in the industry of show business. Rather than review his life, this article will look at how Dean Martin was influenced by Bing Crosby. A good start point is a definition of Dean the performer from nearly fifty years ago. It is part of a write-up of the Dean Martin - Jerry Lewis cabaret act taken from the 'New York Times' of April 8th, 1948. The writer was covering the opening night show at the Copacabana:

"Dean Martin is a personable baritone of Latin caste who sometimes manages to get off a complete romantic song in a husky, casual style often likened to Bing Crosby."

In fact, the early vocal style of Martin has often been likened to Bing's. Sometimes the criticism is faintly praising, as in the review of the film 'My Friend Irma' in the 'Los Angeles Examiner' in September of 1949:

"He shouldn't listen to any more Bing Crosby records - the similarity is uncanny."

Sometimes it is bluntly uncomplimentary:

"At best, nothing more than a pallid imitation of Perry Como and Bing Crosby"

(A quote by Arthur Marx, in his Martin and Lewis biography 'Everybody Loves Somebody Sometimes'.)

Martin regarded any linking of his name with Bing as flattering. Not everyone had the opportunity to put on record their life's ambition but Martin achieved just that in Hollywood on May 4, 1953, when he recorded 'If I Could Sing Like Bing' for Capitol.

There are strong similarities between early Dean and 1940's Bing as far as singing styles go, but that's where comparisons begin and end. Their personal and professional lives and habits could not have been more diverse. That's made plain in the 1992 biography by Nick Tosches called 'Dino - Living High in the Dirty Business of Dreams' (Secker and Warburg).

As this column is mainly about Bing's films I will document the interlinking of their movies. They worked together at Paramount in 1953 when Martin and Lewis were replacing Hope and Crosby as that studio's top musical comedy team. In 'Road to Bali', Dean and Jerry did a spot in a dream sequence gag at the expense of Bing and Bob. In return, the latter turned up as skeletons for the closing minutes of the Martin and Lewis starrer, 'Scared Stiff'. Three years later they paid some kind of acknowledgement to Bing when the last film they made together 'Pardners' was a remake of Crosby's 1936 film 'Rhythm on the Range', and when Bing and Bob came to the end of their Road in 1962 with 'The Road to Hong Kong', Martin appeared in a short episode near that film's end where he is seen kissing Hope and Crosby's leading lady, Joan Collins. Finally, in 1964, there was an opportunity for Bing Crosby and Dean Martin to star together with Sinatra and company in the likeable 'Robin and the Seven Hoods'.

Bing & Dean in 'Robin and the Seven Hoods'

On radio, there was an early appearance by Martin and Lewis on one of Bing's radio shows. They guested on the Chesterfield Show broadcast on November 7th, 1951. Dino duetted 'Sweet Leilani' with Bing and Jerry Lewis joined the two for a parody of 'In the Cool Cool of the Evening'. Both songs are almost exclusively associated with Bing, of course.

The attention paid by this magazine to Bing's television appearances makes it unnecessary to examine in detail this previously neglected area of Crosbyana. The Crosby/Martin TV relationship began in the autumn of 1958. That initial small screen meeting was not typical of what was to follow. The occasion was the 'Eddie Fisher Show' of September 30th, and Jerry Lewis was Fisher's guest. Bing then walked on the show with Dean Martin and interrupted the previously rehearsed guest spot involving Lewis. It was the first public reunion of Martin and Lewis after an acrimonious partnership split some two years previously. Needless to say they led separate public and private lives since and there was no prospect of a permanent show business reunion as the rift approached its fortieth anniversary. The television appearances by Bing and Dean continued through the sixties when they were either guests on each other's shows or turned up together on some equally prestigious offering. Whenever they were together they found an opportunity to do a duet.

Tosches' biography instances two pieces of evidence which highlights the Crosby link at the outset of Martin's attempts to break through as an entertainer. Dean married his first wife in October of 1941 and the first film they saw together as husband and wife that December was 'Birth of the Blues'. When Martin was developing his stage act in 1944 he appeared at the Riobamba in New York and sang 'Sunday, Monday or Always' and 'Melancholy Baby' in a way that revealed he'd paid close attention to the Crosby 78s.

In the recording studios a trail of evidence throughout his thirty-odd years in front of the microphone leaves no doubt as to the major singing influence in Dean Martin's life. In July of 1946 he made his first ever recordings. He was signed by Diamond Records and the initial recording sessions covered Bing's 1941 version of 'Sweetheart of Sigma Chi'. In November of the following year he was given a chance by another independent record label - Apollo - and he waxed another Crosby 'cover' version: 'Louise'. His recording career in the international sense began when Capitol records signed him up in 1948. His first date for them was at their Hollywood Studio and his first solo recording for the label was a Crosby influenced recording of 'Tara Ta Lara Ta Lar'.

Thereafter, the Crosby touch was detectable on many recording dates. When Frank Sinatra set up his own Reprise Label he enticed Martin away from Capitol and the slightly thickening Latin laced voice sometimes lapsed into self parody. It also allowed Dino to fulfil a lifetime's ambition: to record with Bing. He never managed to have Bing to himself for a straight duet. Sinatra always wanted part of the action and Sammy Davis Junior intruded in a couple of songs. During 1963 and 1964 the following Crosby/Martin items were laid down for posterity.

'Fugue for Tinhorns'
'Oldest Established Permanent Floating Crap Game in New York'
'Style'
(The above three with Frank Sinatra).
Mr Booze'
'Don't be a Do-Badder'
(The above two with Sinatra and Sammy Davis).

That last three are from the film 'Robin and the Seven Hoods' where there was an on-screen teaming as well.

Following Dean's Reprise career to its conclusion in 1974, let's look at the final album he made for the company on two dates in November of that year. The disc was 'Once in a While' and the songs selected in addition to the title track were:

'Twilight on the Trail'
'It's Magic'
'Love Thy Neighbour'
'I Cried For You'
'Without a Word of Warning'
'The Day You Came Along'
'That Old Gang of Mine'
'Only Forever'
'If I Had You'

If a Trivial Pursuit card is turned up asking you to name the album's 'odd man out' title, the answer is 'It's Magic'. That is the only song not previously recorded by Bing. The album fell short of the vocal standard being set by Bing in the seventies for the simple reason that by then Dean was becoming lazy and refusing to attend recording sessions. He had shunned attending rehearsals for his weekly television show years previously. For album projects the orchestral/vocal chorus tapes were sent to him by the record producer (usually Jimmy Bowen). He then overdubbed the vocals, which robbed the recordings of the spontaneous rapport that made the Ken Barnes/Pete Moore/Crosby efforts of the time so appealing.

Dean's attitude to work was: why bother? His pastime seemed to be drinking alone. In the last quarter of a century he settled for second best if it meant working less hard. At the end of his life Dean Martin was a spent force. Whereas Bing gave of his best right up the time of his death, Dino stopped caring for his faithful fans years ago. In 1993, the

'Sunday Times' portrayed him as a depressed old man who could not come to terms with life either as an entertainer or family man. In a radio interview, biographer Nick Tosches, told of a lonely man who spent one night a week with his ex-wife, Jeanne, and the rest of the time in lonely isolation. Pleasingly, it does seem that he found some happiness in the closing days of his life being reunited with his family and friends. Now there is one less singer carrying the Crosby torch.

Keith Parkinson

THE A-Z OF BING'S MOVIES

Gaal, Franciska (1904 - 1972). Actress / Cabaret performer. Bing's leading lady in 'Paris Honeymoon' (1939). She played Manya, where her Hungarian accent stood her in good stead for her role as a rose gatherer in the mythical town of Graustarkian. Her Hollywood career began with 'The Buccaneer' (1938) and ended with 'The Girl Downstairs' (1939), with her Crosby starrer sandwiched in-between. She was a popular stage performer and film actress in central Europe before Cecil B. De Mille brought her to Hollywood. She returned to Budapest to be with her ailing mother after spending two years in the USA and found herself trapped there throughout World War II. There was one more film in Austria and a brief Broadway appearance in 1951 before her retirement.

Gallagher, Richard 'Skeets' (1891-1955) Actor. 1933 was Gallagher's year with Bing. He appeared in the short 'Hollywood On Parade No. 4' which promoted 'Too Much Harmony', in which he was half of the vaudeville team portrayed with fellow actor Jack Oakie. It was Oakie who joined Crosby and Gallagher in the song 'Boo Boo Boo' in 'Hollywood On Parade', a song soloed by Bing in 'Too Much Harmony'. Gallagher was almost playing himself in 'Too Much Harmony' because he had been a song and dance man on the vaudeville circuit before entering films in 1923. For the next 30 years he was a second lead supporting character in most of his fifty feature films or the lead in his numerous shorts from the mid-twenties. Major films seemed to avoid him. The nearest he came to quality product was 'Idiot's Delight' (1939) and 'Brother Orchid' (1942) and his last appearance in 'Three For Bedroom C' (1952) was typical of the parts he took on.

Gargan, William (1905-1979). Actor. Considering the hundreds of reels of film Gargan has left us, it's surprising that his only brush with Bing was in RKO's 'The Bells of St. Mary's' (1945). Cast as Joe Gallagher, he plays the father of Patsy Gallagher (Joan Caroll). Bing, as Father O'Malley, re-unites him with his wife (Martha Sleeper) and daughter Patsy's worries end, allowing her to graduate. Gargan transferred his career from the Broadway stage to the Hollywood soundstage in 1932. He was rarely first billed, but his gregarious performances were memorable in second lead and character parts for over 30 years. His moment of glory came in 1940 when he was Oscar nominated for his part in 'They Knew What They Wanted'. With his career on a roll, for a short time he starred as Ellery Queen in a series of B pictures, before accepting prominent supporting parts in the likes of 'The Canterville Ghost' (1944) and 'Miracle in the Rain' (1956). The latter was his final big screen appearance. In the late '50s, he starred in the television detective series 'Martin Kane'. In 1960 he lost the main tool of his trade; his voice. He had cancer of the larynx and an artificial voice box was fitted. This enabled him to make public appearances on behalf of the American Cancer Society condemning smoking. However, the last twenty years of his life were spent outside mainstream showbusiness.

Garnett, Tay (1894-1977) Director. In 1949 Garnett directed Bing in 'A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court'. From then until retirement, none of his films excited critics or audiences. By the time he worked with Bing he had been in films for nearly thirty years. He began as a screenwriter and also turned out gag material for Mack Sennett. By the time Bing was working with Sennett, Garnett had graduated to directing films such as 'Bad Company' (1931). His decade was the 1940s with well remembered titles like 'My Favourite Spy' (1942), 'The Cross of Lorraine' (1944) and 'The Postman Always Rings Twice' (1946). That last title is generally regarded as his best picture. In the 1960s, he was much occupied with television assignments and he made his last big screen film in 'Timber Tramp', released in 1973.

Gaynor, Mitzi (1930 -). Actress and dancer. Mitzi Gaynor's one film with Bing was his 1956 remake of 'Anything Goes'. She played Patsy Blair, the girl Bing brings from London to Broadway to appear in the show 'You're The Top'. As well as singing the film's title song, she shared vocal numbers with Bing and Donald O'Connor. Yet she never regarded herself as a singer, having set her heart on becoming a dancer and making her professional debut as a ballerina at the age of twelve. Fox signed her up for film work in 1950 but dropped her four years later when assignments such as 'My Blue Heaven' (1950), 'Down Among The Sheltering Palms' (1953) and 'There's No Business Like Showbusiness' (1954) failed to establish her as a box office draw. She was not unemployed for long. She had the good luck to fall in love and marry talent agent Jack Bean, who immediately secured work for her in a string of successes, including 'Anything Goes', 'The Joker Is Wild' (1957), 'Les Girls' (1957) and 'South Pacific' (1958). There were only three more films before her retirement from movies in 1963, all light comedies which failed to make an impact. She wisely decided that her future lay in television

and cabaret before going into semi-retirement. There was a possible option to work with Bing again in films in 1965 when they were both lined up for the Irving Berlin musical 'Say It With Music', but that came to nothing. She was re-united with him however on American Television variety shows.

Gee, I Wish I Was Back In The Army. Song. The sentimental finale to 'White Christmas' serves as a reminder of Christmas Eve 1944. Since then Bing's fortunes as an entertainer have made him a topline performer. The film concludes with him appearing on Christmas Eve on the stage of his former wartime General's night club. The General enters the club and Bing, Danny Kaye, Rosemary Clooney and Vera Ellen sing 'Gee, I Wish I Was Back In The Army'. The song was one of sixteen Irving Berlin compositions used in the film.

Gemora, Charlie (1903-1961). Character Actor, though if you saw him in the street you would not recognise him. His speciality was playing apes. In 'Road To Zanzibar' (1941) he is Agua, the gorilla. When Hope and Crosby are captured by cannibals, Hope is made to fight Agua before the boys escape. Five years later he played the part of a bear in 'Road to Utopia'. He played the title role in 'The Gorilla' and joined the Marx Brothers in 'At The Circus' (1939).

Gershwin, Ira (1896-1985). Lyric writing brother of George. His only film link with Bing was as writer of the four songs in 'The Country Girl' (1954) for which Harold Arlen provided the melodies. He wrote for films and shows rather than composing isolated popular songs. His most successful collaboration was with his brother. The films included 'Shall We Dance' (1937) which featured 'They All Laughed', 'A Damsel In Distress' (1937) which included 'A Foggy Day' and 'The Goldwyn Follies' (1938) which introduced 'Love Is Here To Stay' to the repertoire of most singers of standard popular songs. His stage musicals included 'Girl Crazy' (1932) with George and 'Porgy And Bess' with George again providing the music and Du Bose Heyward acting as co-lyricist. His most popular work for the big screen immediately preceded 'The Country Girl' when he collaborated again with Arlen on the Judy Garland musical 'A Star Is Born'.
Bing did not sing any George Gershwin compositions in any of his films.

Get Yourself A Phonograph. Song written by Johnny Burke and James Van Heusen for the film 'The Emperor Waltz' (1948). It was recorded for the soundtrack by Bing but not used.

Getting Nowhere. Song. A charming little ditty from 'Blue Skies' (1946). In the film Bing sits at the piano and sings it to his daughter, played by Karolyn Grimes. Words and music by Irving Berlin.

Bing with Karolyn Grimes after singing 'Getting Nowhere'

Gibbons, Cedric (1893-1960). Probably the most famous and certainly the most influential art director from Hollywood's golden years. He worked exclusively for MGM from 1924 onwards and it was with that studio in 1956 that he had his only association with a Crosby Film. That was 'High Society' where Gibbons shared art director credit with Hans Peters. If the truth were known, he acted in a supervisory capacity at MGM during his prolific years although his contract permitted him to take sole screen credit. He will be remembered for as long as there is a Hollywood for the simple reason that he designed the Oscar, the Academy Award statuette. He then went on to win a dozen of them. The 1950 one was for 'Consistent Excellence', the rest for films beginning with 'The Bridge Of San Luis Rey' (1929), including 'The Merry Widow' (1934), 'Gaslight' (1944) and 'An American In Paris' (1951) and concluding with 'Somebody Up There Likes Me' (1956). He called it quits that same year after working on 'Lust For Life'. Despite his busy life as art director he found time to co-direct 'Tarzan and His Mate' in 1934 and be the husband of Dolores Del Rio from 1930 to 1941.

Gifford, Frances (1920 -) Actress. Mary Frances Gifford had a major part in 'Riding High' (1950) with the role of Margaret Higgins. She was cast as Bing's fiance. Her only other brush with Bing in the movies was a brief appearance in the finale of the all star 'Star Spangled Rhythm' (1942). At that time she had peaked as far as fan adulation was concerned, because she had been the

fearless heroine of the serial 'Jungle Girl' the previous year. Juvenile boys were much impressed although she had gone unnoticed in minor roles since she entered films in 1937 immediately after leaving high school. A couple of good films in the first part of the 1940s implied a strong acting career ahead. She had received critical attention in 'The Glass Key' (1942) and 'Our Vines Have Tender Grapes' (1945). An unsuccessful marriage to actor James Dunn and a serious injury in 1948 in a car accident meant she made only one film after 'Riding High'. That was 'Sky Commando', released in 1953. Five years later she entered a mental ward in a California hospital. There has been no public contact since.

Glazer, Benjamin (1887-1958). Screenwriter and producer. Four formative years in films for Bing were heavily influenced by Ben Glazer. He helped provide the screenplay for 'She Loves Me Not' (1934) and then produced 'The Big Broadcast of 1936' (1935), 'Anything Goes' (1936), 'Rhythm On The Range' (1937) and 'Double Or Nothing' (1937). When Glazer bowed out of Bing's life, film exhibitors in the States voted Bing into fourth place in terms of box office pull. Glazer was born in Belfast and he became a solicitor and then a journalist before writing stories for silent pictures in the early 1920s. He was involved with very few films after his role as producer on Bing's Paramount pictures. Two years before his death he made a comeback of sorts when he was responsible for the screen adaptation of 'Carousel'.

The Missing Bing Films

In BING 111, we mentioned some queries about several films which may have Bing in them. Geoff Milne sent in a most interesting response which we now reproduce.

Page 25 in the last issue of BING raises some interesting queries, particularly regarding the two films referred to in the Variety ad of December 1930. Details of these are as follows:

THOSE THREE FRENCH GIRLS

MGM Production No. 507 (Filmed Summer / early Autumn 1930)

starred: Fifi d'Orsay, Reginald Denny, George Grossmith, Yola d'Avril, Sandra Ravel, Cliff Edwards and Polly Moran.

songs: We Are Six Poor Mortals (Meyer)
Prisoner's Song (Massey)
Oriental Ballyhoo (unknown)
You're Simply Delish (Meyer)

MANY A SLIP

Universal Production No. 115-1 (Filmed late 1930)

starred: Joan Bennett, Lew Ayres, Slim Summerville, Ben Alexander, Virginia Sale and Roscoe Karns

music: There Must Be Somebody For Me (Handman & Ryan)
Let's Get On a Merry Go Round (Handman)
Football Freddy (Leslie & Conrad)

It now remains for someone to establish exactly how Bing or the Rhythm Boys were used in the films, on-screen or off. Perhaps someone in the USA may be able to help. Incidentally, both are feature length films.

The book referred to in Robert Achorn's letter is not "A Shot In The Dark" but "A Song In The Dark". The Technicolor production number described as a giant violin cavorting on screen, taken from the unfinished "The March Of Time" and used in "Broadway To Hollywood" lasts for 45 seconds. The violin does not cavort - it rises from the bottom of the screen, the bow placed across the strings acting as a platform for a line of chorus girls. A second line of girls appears from the bottom of the screen, at which point the action is cut to two of the main characters, dressed in Regency costumes, preparing to make an entrance on-stage. As they do so, the scene fades, so we are denied the pleasure of hearing Bing sing 'Poor Little G-String'. Hollywood are past masters at cutting songs. The sequence I've just described appears only in black-and-white.

Geoff Milne

Editor: Some little known facts from Geoff which encouraged me to carry out some research of my own. There is a marvellous set of books called 'Hollywood Song' by Ken Bloom and in Volume 2 there appears information about the film 'Those Three French Girls'. It seems that a number of songs were not used in the film and these were:
I'd Be So Happy With You
In Good Old Paree
The Moment We Met
Rattling Along
The Right Way To Love

Were these songs filmed by Bing and / or the Rhythm Boys but then deleted from the film? Incidentally it is known that a number of songs were deleted from 'Reaching For The Moon' as well.

I could trace 'Many a Slip' from the book 'The Universal Story' and it confirms that the film was released in 1931. Interestingly, the song 'There Must Be Somebody For Me' appeared in another Lew Ayres film 'Up For Murder' which was released the same year. I wonder if the filmed segment was simply cut from one film and used in the other.

The 'Hollywood Song' books also mention 'Broadway To Hollywood' as follows:-

BROADWAY TO HOLLYWOOD MGM 1933

Also released as 'March Of Time' the title by which it was originally filmed. It was to be a revue but a plot was added and the film retitled. Released as 'Ringing Up The Curtain' internationally and starring Alice Brady, Frank Morgan, Nelson Eddy (his film debut) and Mickey Rooney (His first MGM picture).

So, I hope these facts will help others to track down the films and to check whether Bing is in them. I suspect that Bing and the Rhythm Boys filmed spots for all three films but the material was cut before the films were issued. I should love to be proved wrong.

Finally, here is another film query. In the October, 1959 edition of BINGANG, an extract from the San Francisco Chronicle is used which states:

"Watch for Bing Crosby's sneak appearance in 'The Big Circus". If you look quick enough, you'll spot Bing in the gaping grandstand crowd which watches Kathryn Grant do tricks on the high trapeze."

Who will be the first to get the video out and use the freeze-frame button to see if that's accurate?

ONCE IN A WHILE

Dean Martin - the death of Dean last December has been covered in depth by Keith Parkinson in his Celluloid Crosby section and it is not appropriate to duplicate much of what has been said already. On behalf of the ICC, we wrote to Bernard Thorpe of the Dean Martin Association to send our condolences. It is sad to see the showbiz greats of Bing's era slowly passing away and although he did not often work with Bing, we must also now note the loss of another legend in his own lifetime, the one and only:-

Gene Kelly. Gene died in his sleep on 2 February at the age of 83. Born Eugene Curran Kelly in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, he started out as a dance teacher and then moved into stage work which soon brought him to New York. He originally made his name in a show called 'The Time Of Your Life' in 1940 and in the same year he starred in the stage production of 'Pal Joey'. Hollywood beckoned in 1942 and he worked with Judy Garland in 'For Me and My Girl'. His film career took off and films such as 'Cover Girl', 'Anchors Aweigh', 'The Pirate', 'Take Me Out To The Ball Game' and 'On The Town' soon followed. Gene received a special Academy Award in 1951 for 'An American In Paris' and the landmark film of his life followed in 1952 with the marvellous 'Singin' In The Rain'. Bing had Gene on his Kraft Music Hall show on 4 May, 1944 when they sang a parody of 'H-a-r-r-i-g-a-n' together but that was their only radio appearance together as far as is known. They both appeared in the film 'Let's Make Love' with Bing trying to teach Yves Montand to sing and then deciding it was a lost cause and bringing in Gene Kelly to coach Yves in dancing. Bing and Gene were two of the narrators of the MGM film 'That's Entertainment' in 1974 and in 1979 Gene introduced the TV show 'A Bing Crosby Christmas - Just like the Ones We Used to Know ' which was a review of Bing's TV Xmas specials.

we briefly mentioned the loss of Bob Lundberg in our last edition and Charles Baillie, his long time colleague in BINGthings Society, now sends us this tribute.

ROBERT D. LUNDBERG
12/20/17—11/4/95

Robert D. (Bob) Lundberg, Founder and President of the BINGthings Society, passed away on November 4 after a long battle with cancer. Bob, who also was Editor and Publisher of BINGTALKS - the quarterly publication of the Society - has long been associated with Crosbyana. According to Bob's widow, Joyce, he became a Crosby fan and record collector in 1933 after seeing Bing star in Paramount Pictures' "College Humor." During their 51-year marriage, Joyce indicated that his interest in Bing continued to grow along with the size of his collection of records, tapes, videos, posters, and other Crosby memorabilia.

Prior to founding BINGthings in 1989, Bob was a director of the Bing Crosby Historical Society, assisting the late Ken Twiss in editing and publishing the BCHS newsletter, "The Crooner." He also played a prominent part in organising the annual BCHS tribute dinners in Tacoma honoring Bing's memory. Bob continued the tradition of annual tribute dinners with BINGthings Society members

and friends. The first dinner was held in Kingston, N.Y., on Sept. 16, 1989, followed by Hollywood, Cal. (2-24-90); Kingston, N.Y. (9-15-90); Southbury, Conn. (9-16-91 and 9-11-92); Elko, Nev. (7-16-93); and Fishkill, N.Y. (9-26-94). Only Bob's failing health kept him from organising an eighth tribute dinner in 1995.

As anyone knowing Bob would anticipate, he was a successful businessman, and participated actively in civic and community affairs. After college at the University of Washington, and service in the Army from 1942 to 1944, he opened Lundberg Hardware; and in 1954, he and his two brothers took over Lundberg Concrete Pipe Co., which was sold in 1978. Among other activities during his business career, he found time to serve two terms on the Fircrest (suburb of Tacoma) Town Council; became a charter member and President of the Northwest Tacoma Kiwanis Club; served as President of Oregon-Washington Concrete Products Assn.; and became a founding director of a local bank.

Bob is survived by Joyce, his wife of 51 years; children Roger (Julie), Ralph (Margaret) and Roxanne (James) Hjalseth; six grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren. He is also survived by his brothers, Bill and Jim, and was preceded in death by his twin sister, Virginia Windh, and grandson, Chad.

When Bob left us in November, Bing lost one of his most dedicated supporters, and I lost a close, personal friend. Let us hope that Bing and Bob can get together 'up there.' Bing couldn't find better company!

Charles D. Baillie
Editor, BINGsings.

(Editor: Thanks Charles. We shall all miss Bob and as we go to press we understand that Joyce Lundberg and Charles believe that they have found a group interested in continuing BINGthings Society, but no final decision has been made as yet.)

Just An Echo?

The Musical Autobiography Revisited.

Clive Menadue contributes some contentious thoughts.

Sometime prior to 1954 someone had the bright idea that was later to come to some kind of fruition. Why not have Bing Crosby narrate the history of his professional life and illustrate it with the songs that had been associated with him from the beginning right up to the present day? It must have sounded like a winner. Younger people were suddenly in the money and they were turning to cruder and louder music than that which had held the stage for so long and the groaner's pipes were showing signs of wear and tear. Now surely was the time to produce a set of records that would demonstrate to the world at large that Bing Crosby, during the years of his greatness had possessed a voice of unsurpassed tone and colour that had left all his rivals struggling in his wake.

These thoughts must have passed through the minds of many of Bing's fans when they first heard of the project. I think most of us expected to hear a carefully produced recording which included some original and factual recollections from Bing set against some kind of nostalgic atmosphere created perhaps by an imaginative studio orchestra that would be interspersed between the recordings that had electrified the world in their day. We could not have been more wrong! Someone, somewhere seems to have decided that this record set that should have stood as a landmark in Bing's career should be rushed through on the cheap!

At the start of the recording we are treated to a weird organ wailing away behind Bing's opening remarks. Anyone who has heard excerpts from old American radio mysteries will know what I mean. This is evidently a cut price way of indicating a gently reminiscent mood. Bing sounds tired and a little hoarse which doesn't augur well when you consider that he has over 40 songs to sing before the first original recording makes its long overdue appearance. Anyone who wouldn't mind these songs being sung by Michael Holliday or Jim Reeves will enjoy this section. They had pleasant voices but no startling highs and lows in their armouries. Bing did; it's what placed him above and apart from other singers. Sadly these attributes are not noticeable in any of the versions especially recorded for the autobiography mainly because Bing's voice was going through a curiously bland and flat stage at the time of recording so that each song sounds much like the one before it. Something might have been saved had there been lush backings and fine arrangements, but these are not present and we have to make do with virtually a piano and drums to caress our ears.

At his peak, the boss could sing to a tin whistle and sound great. Here, he is some way past his vocal peak and this poverty stricken backing does nothing to hide the impression of a once fine voice now caged and unable to soar and dive as in its prime.

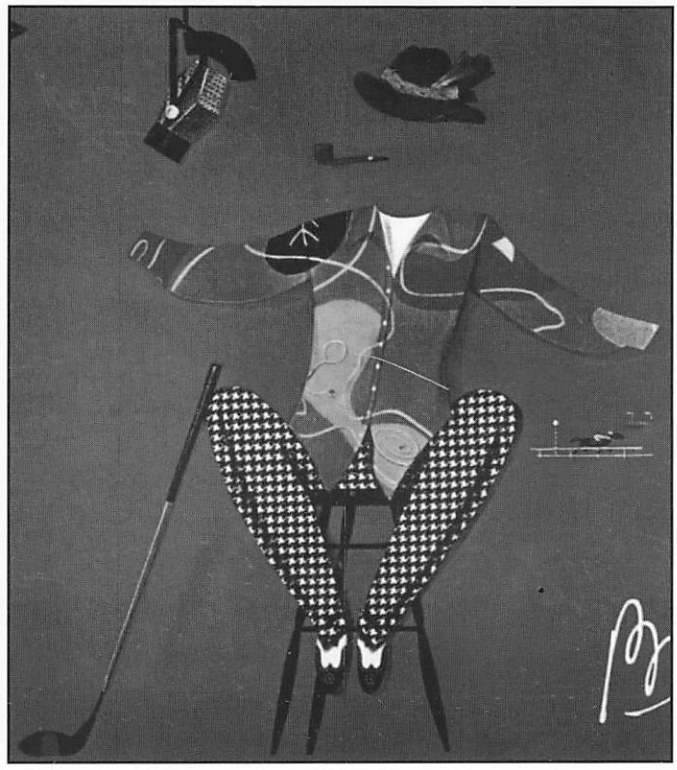
When the first of the original records is played ('Small Fry') I felt like cheering! Here at long last was the real voice of the man who had a magical way with a song. Sadly, the onset of the original recordings is the signal for many of Bing's later and inferior discs to be aired. This album could and should have been both a tribute to Bing and a lasting monument to the great work he had done to promote and enhance popular music but shamefully it turned out to be a poorly thought out, carelessly produced and, for the most part, monotonously and tiredly sung tribute to mediocrity.

There is no point in trying to judge Bing Crosby's performance by the standards of his imitators. In my opinion he must be judged against his own Everest high standards set in his (for me) peak years of the thirties and the giant shadow he cast over show business in those days continued to hover over him in his fading years. An excuse is made during the course of the record that this or that original version of a song could not be played due to a worn master recording. Which of us in the fifties was not more used to a little scratching here and there on a record than to the flawless perfection expected of current recordings? Indeed, we still listen to the originals today unperturbed by the odd hiss and distortion so that theory doesn't hold water.

As a tribute to mark a lifetime's achievement in music by some mediocre entertainer this would have been a barely adequate album. When someone of Bing's stature is involved, it can only be considered to be, at its best, a remarkably poor effort. It's hard at this distance in time to point the finger of suspicion at any single culprit who could shoulder most of the blame, but at least one of the participants probably had his mind on a round of golf!

Clive Menadue

(Editor: Well, how to put some balance on Clive's opinions which are bound to provoke controversy? We have a duty to publish conflicting views and I think it's healthy for the ICC members to debate items. Clive last caused a furore in the Letters sections a year or two back when he expressed the view that Bing's final Christmas TV show should not be issued on video and we realised then that Clive was not a fan of the older Bing but preferred the 30s version. We carried an article about the Musical Autobiography in BING 105 when the album was described as an old friend but a reprint of a contemporary review did highlight the re-recorded tracks and felt that "there is 'something lacking' in this otherwise entertaining and musically historic release." We know that the original recordings could not be used on this Decca set as they were owned by other companies and the only solution was for Bing to re-record them. It was evidently decided to use the Buddy Cole trio to accompany short versions by Bing of his early hits and this was probably a practical and cost effective solution. My own view of the set when I purchased it in 1960 whilst on an early voyage of discovery into the Crosby career was absolute fascination. I loved it and I played it constantly although I will admit it was usually the later commercial tracks that were on the turntable. Now that I have the Japanese CD set, I find myself rediscovering the tracks made with Buddy Cole and in the main I find them mellow, easy and extremely pleasant. OK, so it's not the Bing of the thirties but it is the voice of a 51 year old legend who still had much to offer as he quickly showed by his subsequent '50s films 'White Christmas' and 'High Society'. Bing had something at every stage of his career and whilst his voice had its widest range in the thirties this doesn't necessarily mean that this was when it was at its best. He enjoyed far more commercial success in the 40s with his records when the deeper, more easy going tones attracted incredible attention. So thanks Clive for expressing your opinions. I suspect other members will respond with their views and I look forward to some interesting debate.)



One Sweet Letter From You

Members' views, and opinions and comments are always welcomed and we have great pleasure in reproducing some of the letters received since the last issue.

John Teale, 4 Rack House Rd., Wythenshawe, Manchester M23 0BN

In all the discographies and LPs of Bing Crosby, the accompaniment for 'Please' (16/9/32) is given as Anson Weeks and his Orchestra, whereas the 78rpm disc label (DB 1802) indicates that Irving Aaronson is the accompanist. I would have thought that a label printed so near the date of pressing of the record would have had a greater claim to accuracy. Could somebody please explain the anomaly?
(Editor: Reference to Don and Peter Haizelden gave the information that DB 1802 is an English Columbia which was issued in October 1938. An earlier issue on English Brunswick (1380) in December 1932 shows the backing as just 'Orchestral Accompaniment' whilst the original American Brunswick (6394) shows Anson Weeks as the orchestra. On the other side of DB 1802 is 'Love In Bloom' which featured Bing with Irving Aaronson. I suspect that the compilers of DB 1802 simply assumed that Aaronson was backing 'Please' as well and put this instead of 'Orchestral Accompaniment' as had appeared on Brunswick 6394.)

Vic Monk, Penshurst, 19 Danson Rd., Bexleyheath, Kent DA6 8HA

Nearly another year gone by and I feel I really must write to all those good people at the ICC who have been such a help to me, some by personal contact and all by the production of our wonderful magazine.

I've been a Crosby fan since I saw 'The Big Broadcast' in 1932 when I was at quite an impressionable age and have not faltered since. We started our first record shop when I came out of the army in 1946 and I started the 'technical' side by fitting gramophone springs. We were the only shop for miles that could do it. In those days, the term 'Hi-Fi' had not yet been invented but we managed to get good quality reproduction from 78 discs. We had to make our own amplifiers and loudspeakers to get it. Bing of course was well represented on our shelves. Over the next twenty years we saw the advent of long playing records and stereo, also the transistor. Our best selling single over all this period was sorry, not Bing, but Anton Karas playing the 'Third Man' theme on the zither. By the mid 60s we had five Hi-Fi shops with record departments. Also by the mid 60s, other things were happening, one was that by this time every High Street seemed to be full of Hi-Fi shops selling records, so we sold up and went into the antique business for the next twenty years.

Now fully retired, I decided some six years ago to try and expand my Crosby collection to include all the commercially issued Bing. My sources are many and varied. I should think that the most fruitful are boot fairs, lots of looking with no result then a real gem turns up, very satisfying. To date, I have some 2500 tracks including repeats if they are recorded on a different date, also some 500 radio recordings. I've also picked up some American and Australian LPs which include a lot of very interesting 'out takes'.

I have a copy of an advertisement which appeared in the Melody Maker of May 1928 which was meant to introduce the Rhythm Boys. It is a Parlophone advert and it says:-

Have You Heard the New Wonder Record by Frankie Trumbauer
and his marvellous Orchestra featuring the Rhythm Boys. R 3526 'Mississippi Mud' Fox-Trot.

Frankie Trumbauer has made another wonderful record, this time he introduces the famous Rhythm Boys. 'Mississippi Mud' a tune in a thousand, will be a great popular favourite with all followers of this outstanding Orchestra.

How wrong can you get? The vocal is actually by Bing and Trumbauer. It's very good but hardly an introduction to the Rhythm Boys!

Michael Kenefick, 4 Friar St., Youghal, Co. Cork, Ireland

You may be interested to read that I sent for a copy of the 'Memories of Bing Crosby' CD with Roy Chappell from the Terry Dash Agency as advertised in the last BING. Within 6 days I got the CD back from them which was excellent service. I had heard of Roy Chappell of course but could never find anything by him so that was one of the reasons I sent for the CD. I must say he has a very nice voice and the whole CD was excellent. I would certainly buy anything by him in the future. I would like to hear him from his Sid Phillips days as I like Dixieland and

Sid was always my favourite. I can never find a CD of him anywhere.

George Patmore, 53 Severn Way, Cressage, Shropshire SY5 6DS

Thanks for another interesting and packed BING magazine and certainly nobody can complain about late arrival this time! John Bignell, via the letters page, raised a query about the meaning of certain lines from 'Love Is Just Around The Corner'. I've always heard the queried line as "but me, I'm two to ten" and interpreted this to mean that the character is a steady, reliable and 'regular' guy - as regular as one on a 2 to 10 shift work pattern. Or, to quote another song "Maybe I'm Wrong (again)".

I know that many members like to find differences in Bing's recorded 'alternate takes' but personally I get more enjoyment from hearing Bing sing completely different arrangements of a particular song. I was glad to hear on the World War II songs double CD the very lilting version of 'Swinging On A Star' (with no accompanying vocal group as he had in the commercial recording, the Williams Bros.). Also on the same CD a lovely rendering by Bing - not recorded commercially - of 'Shoo, Shoo Baby'. He really gets the jiving mood on this - great!
(Editor: Thanks George, but I was still not sure about the meaning of the lyrics of 'Love Is Just Around The Corner' and I spoke to Don Haizelden who has the sheet music of the song. It seems that the indicated words do not appear in the actual sheet music issued in the USA. The A and B takes both have the same lyrics and as I was sure that Bing sings 'true to ten', I checked with the very poor quality video I have of 'Here Is My Heart' from which the song comes. At the beginning of the film, Bing sings the sheet music version of the song and later on, when he is working incognito as a waiter, he sings it again and is interrupted by some unwelcome amorous attention from Suzette, the maid (played by Cecelia Parker). He finishes the song by singing 'I'm ten times as faithful as all your other men' at which the maid's face brightens and then he sings 'they all are true to no-one but you, but me I'm true to ten' at which her face falls. In other words, he is saying he has lots of girlfriends. She cheers up when he continues 'Let's go cuddle in a corner etc.'.)

Sylvia Crellin, 127 Glastonbury Rd., Morden, Surrey SM4 6NY

....We bought a Father Christmas head from a garden centre and everytime you walk by it, Bing's voice booms out singing 'We Wish You a Merry Christmas'....
(Editor: Sounds like a real collectible and I can foresee the sales of Father Christmas heads expanding dramatically as members look for this item.)

Les Brice, 40 Crown Rd., Clacton On Sea, Essex CO15 1 AT

.....You can learn more about Bing in one issue of the mag than you could in many issues of the old magazines put together. I enjoy everything that is printed in it, especially Lionel's articles. I wonder if he is actually Len Deighton or some other famous whodunit writer, though I am sure that you have all been sworn to secrecy!! Who else could go from summers getting hotter, and jam jars, to 'Silent Night' ? As a seven year old schoolboy in the mid thirties, one of our regular summer holiday afternoon activities was to sit on the kerb, with our feet in the road and with a stick burst the bubbles of tar that kept appearing. In those days there were very few cars where we lived, and we would have plenty of warning if a horse and cart was on its way. How could I tell of that and get to something like 'Harbour Lights' ?? Lionel could, sorry I meant to say Len!!

....I would like to say to you and all the other stalwarts who bring us BING a very sincere 'thank you'. Eighteen years after the great man left us, the mag keeps getting better and better.

John Bignell, 21 St. Andrews Avenue, Wembley, Middlesex HA0 2QB

....As for the Calendar, what a splendid first all colour issue. What is more it also provides us with a delightful conundrum. For the first time I was introduced to two songs I'd never heard of before. 'I Was Taken By Storm' by Irving Bibo and Basil Ziegler and 'Summer Souvenirs' by Charles Newman and Fred Coots. I have just over 11,500 song titles either on LP or CD (I am a collector of vintage recordings of the 1920s up to the 1950s of jazz and popular dance bands in addition to Bing) and do not possess either of these songs. Furthermore they are not listed in any reference book I have including Brian Rust and Sandy Forbes 'British Dance Bands On Record 1911 to 1945'. I am sure this will be a great talking point next time.
(Editor: 'Summer Souvenirs' was sung by Bing three times on the Kraft Music Hall in 1938. It was a hit for Larry Clinton and his Orchestra in October 1938. A song called 'I Was Taken By Storm' appeared in the 1935 film 'Dizzy Dames' but the composers were given as Louis Alter and Edward Heyman. Can anyone help with further

information about 'I Was Taken By Storm'?)

Dag Vagsas, Moltke Moes Vei 7, 0851 Oslo, Norway

...There was a small notice in one of Norway's' biggest newspapers a couple of weeks before Christmas which may interest you and it translates as follows:

CRUSADE AGAINST CROSBY

The organist in Malselv Church, Arlene Hanson, has denied the Sorreisa Choir permission to sing 'White Christmas' as part of a Christmas concert next week-end. Hanson told 'Nordlys' newspaper that the song makes people think of Bing Crosby and fireplaces rather than the child Jesus in the manger. Neither the choir members, conductor Eivind Valnes nor the vicar Kristin Stang Meloe quite knows whether to laugh or cry...

I intend to write a really detailed article sometime about Bing's appearance in Norway in 1977. Bing came to Oslo with Harry and Joe Bushkin's quartet in late August 1977 to make an appearance at an annual outdoor event in a very small town called Mysen about 42 miles from Oslo with only 7000 inhabitants. It rained heavily during the evening and most of the people in the audience sat with umbrellas over their heads. After an hour's parade of Norwegian, Swedish and Danish popular singers from throughout the last twenty years, Bing was due to do twenty minutes. He came on and did almost an hour with rain even pouring onto the slippery stage! He so enjoyed his relaxing stay in Norway where he got the chance to do some salmon fishing and talk with the local people who treated him as any other regular nice guy, that he donated his complete fee for the appearance to the Red Cross after the show. The contract for this he just scribbled on a piece of cardboard which he found in the nearest corner. He even ate some meals at a local inn and spent a night in the modest private home of the man who organised the concert at the small place. He didn't even bother to put on his toupee a lot of the time. I met him backstage right after the concert to get his autograph. He strolled around by himself and was glad to sign a picture. However he had his hands full with two large glasses of something taken with ice cubes, which I had to hold for him while he wrote his name.

I will write the article someday....
(Editor: See Trading Post for a video of this rare show)

John Sawbridge, 36 Brighton Rd., Leicester LE5 0HA.

Thank you for publishing my letter in BING 110 regarding my experience in 1934 listening to 'American Wireless.' My reference to the popular songs of late 1934 included 'Stars Fell On Alabama' and I have a later recording of Bing singing this. I wonder however if anyone has a recording of the other song which I mentioned 'Lost In a Fog'? I know that Bing's brother Bob recorded this in 1934.

I know that it is a long time ago, but in the Brunswick catalogue in 1934, there were 6 good songs from the film 'We're Not Dressing'. To obtain a signed photograph of Bing, one had to purchase more than one of these recordings. I could not afford more than one record at 2/6d and I often wondered what the photograph looked like. Does anyone know?

Alf Cassidy, 19 Templefields, Bengeo, Hertford, Herts SG14 3LR

.....I wish we could have a Bing get together down here like they do in Leeds.
(Editor: Any takers to try and organise a local meeting in the Hertford area?)

LIONEL'S LINES

"TOO MARVELLERS, FOUR WERDS"

It's trivia time, again. So, be on your toes - questions will be asked. I hope you will forgive my using your magazine as a soap-box, from which to air my opinions on the errors of the World but you should know, by now, that I am unable to leap headlong, into the article for BING, without first indulging in a little idle chatter of, "sealing wax and cabbages".

There must be older chaps out there, like myself, born before "music" became "sounds", who lament the declining standards in our language, in all divisions. The personal cross that I have been obliged to bear, for a lifetime, is an "odd" name. The two, simple syllables that comprise my surname seem to induce chronic attacks of word-blindness in those called upon to say or write it. During my period in the world of commerce, there was a customer, (the father of a well-known child actor) who insisted on addressing me as, "Mister Fairjoint". This was easily surpassed at a recent hospital appointment when I was paged as "Leenoil Parimont". However, a few days later, I realised that things could have been worse on hearing a simpering hostess, on an American Quiz Show, introduce a

pair of contestants as, (what sounded like) "Will you please welcome - Effie Cockrind and Dean Demetrol" and the same series has since yielded another "hopeful", who appeared to be called, "Alopecia Carphones"!

A television news item featured a man called "Strobe Talbott" (the unusual double "t" may be significant). I cannot recall his field of expertise but I think it is fair to assume that he must have been the light of his mother's life and during last year's VE Celebrations we had the sublime pretentiousness of "Bruno Peek", who was captioned as, "Street Party Expert". This sounds like a profession we all should have developed a calling for - just imagine those long vacations!

Another trend, designed to baffle us, is exemplified by a shop sign which advertised, "SALE! - SCIPANTS! - £6.99!" What are scipants, I pondered? An inspection of the goods, revealed them to be nothing more exciting than Ski Pants. Apart from the spelling error, this insidious practice of omitting the space between separate words scaled fresh heights of horror when I visited a large chain record store to be greeted with an eye-catching display of CD's which, only after some applied logic, I was able to interpret as, "Blues Hits".

Many of you will have your own favourite examples of these "boners". My collection, offers the following - From a card on the library notice board: "Elocution Lessens Given"; At the supermarket: "Please refrain your children from climbing on this unit"; A banner headline on the front page of the local newspaper: "COUNCIL TAX FISACO", the Operatic Society advertising for a "Lead Swinger" and I must not overlook those students on "Blockbusters" who ask, "Can I have a 'haitch' please, Bob?" or, newsreaders and commentators who prefer "ony" to "only".

It is acknowledged that our language is, unnecessarily, complicated and most of us will have some blind spot. My own grammatical indiscretions and split infinitives are here, for all to see. So, it is little wonder that when we get into the realms of a "dead" language, errors will occur.

The most common of these, in Crosbyana, is the misspelling of "Adeste Fideles". There are no less than seven volumes of reference on my bookshelf (including three authoritative works on Bing Crosby) which all quote, "Adeste Fidelis" Has any confusion arisen with John Philip Sousa's "Semper Fidelis" (also the motto of the US Marines)? Has Bing, himself, misled with his pronunciation? His first recording of the song, in 1934, is slightly suspect but the remainder are exemplary which applies throughout the renditions on radio, although Ken Carpenter's introductions tend to let the side down. I am no Latin scholar but would suspect the disparity in spelling to be the difference between singular and plural or noun and adjective.

Having long been a champion of Bing's enunciation, is it my imagination or does he suffer from a mild (and inconsistent) "hang-up" on words beginning with "in" and "en"? Look for "enstead" on "Road To Morocco" (1942) and "Gone Fishing" and "inchanted from "Out Of This World" or "inchantment" on "San Antonio Rose". Are there others?

The last-named song has caused some queries with its recent re-issues as, "New San Antonio Rose" and to my mind, the prefix is unnecessary. Let us, briefly, recount the story. In 1938, Bob Wills and his Texas Playboys, recorded the number as an instrumental. Irving Berlin Incorporated offered to publish it in 1940 with their own words. Refusing to be elbowed out, Wills came up with the lyric that was published. As far as I am aware, the main title on the song sheet was still "San Antonio Rose" but with the preamble, "The New and Original", a publisher's ploy which can be deemed to be superfluous for identification purposes.

A word of caution. If these references have inspired you to listen again to the song, make sure you are getting the real McCoy. Avoid the LP's from Coral and Hallmark or you will miss that gloriously plaintive, "Oooooh! Broken song, empty words....." in the last stanza which has been edited from these issues. Incidentally, the Hallmark LP - "The Unforgettable 40's" maintains the "clanger" tradition by crediting the songwriter on both sleeve and label as, "Bob Willis" - I know he was a great fast bowler who adopted "Dylan" as a second name but I would think this was the closest he got to being a composer!

Last month, one of our national newspapers carried a small, ongoing, exchange of readers' letters on the rival merits of Sinatra and Crosby. The correspondence closed with a killjoy who claimed that Sinatra (and surely, by implication, Bing) was not a "singer" but a "vocalist". The intention was to be disparaging but the definition treads a very thin line according to my dictionary. A "vocalist" is defined, primarily (and not surprisingly) as, "a singer" and almost as an afterthought, "especially of jazz and popular songs".

"Crooner" was the word that caused a furore when Bing was just beginning to get into his stride as a solo

radio performer and those of nervous disposition might feel obliged to skip the next few paragraphs.

The press came out in force. The Washington "Evening Star" claimed, "As music it is atrocious ... Of doubtful moral quality and the slithering, lounge lizard voice of the crooner is an anathema to so many that radio enterprise is now under an undoubted handicap of unpopularity with enough people to cause the programme promoters to be concerned about their unseen audiences" and from the Springfield "Union", "Crooners resort to vulgar suggestiveness. It is a gratuitous insult to that intelligent person which rightfully expects a better return for its expensive investment in radio equipment".

Even radio itself, chipped in via WOR's programme director, "There is a deadly monotony about crooning that even the lowest morons must get tired of ... The average crooner knows nothing about voice placement ... He is not interested in good artistry as long he can hold his audience with vocal, tricks and mannerisms".

Boston's Cardinal O'Connell was to address the matter with all the subtlety of a napalm attack when he told his congregation, "Immoral and imbecile slush. A degenerate, low-down sort of interpretation of love ... A love song is a beautiful thing in itself ... but listen again with this new idea in your head and see if you do not get a sensation of revolting disgust at a man whining a degenerate song, unworthy of any American man ... we have to put up with verse after verse of ... bleating and whining with disgusting words, the meaning of which is a low-down source of sexual influence ...".

I know that some of you have been listening to the vile subject matter of these quotations, for more than sixty years and so, I urge you to seek counselling, now, in an effort to find redemption from the depraved depths into which you have sunk.

One of the chief exponents of the "decadent" song with "disgusting" words was Cole Porter who endured temporary bans on his, sometimes, risque lyrics and it is, relatively, only a few years ago, that "Love For Sale", written in 1930, was permitted to be used on radio or television. The "catalogue" song became one of his specialities, the style and rhyme pattern of these check-lists helping to secure them in the public memory; the drawback being the need for regular revision to maintain their topicality. But you can't fail to remember that "a Waldorf salad" is going to rhyme with "a Berlin ballad" and if you really know the score, from the second verse of the same song, that there are, "gifted humans like Vincent Youmans".

This mention of their peers in a lyric was a device used by many songwriters. Lorenz Hart names Arthur Schwartz and Noel Coward. Ralph Freed wrote, "I love a Gershwin tune, How about you?" and Ira Gershwin goes for "Kern and Cole Porter" but as far as I can tell, only Porter has had the temerity to name himself in one of his own songs. Admittedly, the reference is self-deprecating rather than laudatory.

"...Is it Bach that I hear,
Or just a Cole Porter song..."

Are you straining your brain, trying to remember where you have heard it before - possibly by Bing? Although both Frank and Ella have dallied with it, the song is not heard that often. Benny Green's book, "Let's Face The Music" ridicules Cole Porter's claim that he worked on the lyric while waiting for help to arrive after his crippling riding accident, smugly pointing out that the song was copyrighted more than two weeks before the accident. Green neglects to mention that the copyright was applied for as an unpublished number and it was almost five months later, that a verse was added plus many amendments to the original refrain. The title is, "At Long Last Love" and if it is still unfamiliar, you can hear Bing demonstrating the benefits of vocal under-statement, at the time when it was most popular, on the excellent CD of Kraft songs, "'We're Just Wild About Harry". Don't let it deter you that the composing credits have been attributed to Bobby Dolan and Walter O'Keefe.

As we know, the calendar can be a tyrant if one is trying to recapture distant memories. Here is an anecdote from Sy Oliver which has the ring of truth, despite discrepancies in the time scale - "I was with Tommy Dorsey in Bing Crosby's room listening to an arrangement of a tune called, "You Lucky People You" which Bing was going to record the next day but obviously, he didn't like the arrangement and before I could stop him, Tommy said, 'Hey, Sy, why don't you knock off an arrangement for Bing!" So, I wrote one overnight and Bing was so pleased that he said he wanted to do something for me in return, like introducing a song of mine on his radio show 'The Kraft Music Hall'. I gave him 'Yes Indeed' and he not only introduced it but he also recorded it with Connie Boswell". Here are the relevant dates, all in 1940 which just don't quite jell - "Yes Indeed" first airing on Kraft - 28th November; Recording of "Yes Indeed " - 13th December; Recording of "You Lucky People" - 20th December. As you will see, to make the story absolutely accurate, the "urgent" recording of "You Lucky People, You" would have had to have been postponed from a date prior to the 28th November.

Bing and Connie Boswell sing 'Yes Indeed' on the Kraft Music Hall.

A "cowboy" song that seems to find favour among many readers is, "Legend Of Old California" and part of my interest is, "mystery". Where did it come from? Both tune and lyric are fairly nondescript but Bing makes them grow on you and neither really offers a clue to a handsome blood-line originating with Harry Warren and Johnny Mercer. It is not from a film - not even the lowliest of low-budget "oaters". There is no note of it having been recorded by anyone, other than Bing. "Our Huckleberry Friend" mentions it, only in passing, in an alphabetical index of Johnny Mercer's published works. Another book from the same series, "The Saga Of Harry Warren" overlooks it entirely, in the chronological listing of his tunes.

Two renditions from Bing are available, consisting of the commercial record and one from Kraft, a few days later. As might be expected, there is little variation between them, apart from hearing him, echoing the last words, "some day" only once on the record but three times on the radio version. Was it specially commissioned to back a similar song, "Prairieland Lullaby? Perhaps, the answer can be found in the foreword that Bing wrote for the aforementioned Harry Warren book, "I thought I had sung all of Harry's songs. I missed a great many. But it wasn't "Mousie" Warrens' fault. "Mousie" is Harry's brother and official song plugger, he called on me regularly, with a sheaf of Harry's songs which he would demonstrate, no matter where I happened to be. He was always ready to lay one on me and I was always ready to use it." And our hearts must go out to those popular singers who endured the hazard of being waylaid in washrooms or cornered in the commissary by, what must have been, yesterday's equivalent of being ambushed by people with clipboards, who are "conducting a survey"!

Returning to the "odd" name issue or, in this case, almost "unique". In our last issue, Robert Achorn disclosed that Bob Hope portrayed a character called "Bing Powell" in "The Ziegfeld Follies Of 1936" but when did Bing play Elvis Presley's father? A "catch" question, of course. Kurt Russell impersonated Elvis in the 1980 TV movie, "Elvis!" and "Pa" Presley was played by his real father, Bing Russell. Do we know the how, when and why he came by this illustrious name? - His parents? Doubtful, Kurt was born in 1951 and supposing his father had been around 20 then, his birthday would have been in the early Thirties, at the time when the real Bing was hardly a household name and unlikely to inspire christening copycats. If born prior to this he might have been, another reader of "The Bingville Bugle". Again - unlikely. Was the name adopted to boost a career in Hollywood? The eventual rewards could be counted as disappointing. He was a character actor seen in many 'B' films, probably getting his best parts in "The Horse Soldiers" with John Wayne and William Holden and as the deputy in television's "Bonanza". Did he sing a bit, to inherit this nickname? Not known. He was an ex-baseball player, so, possibly, the soubriquet was earned while indulging in this game, but in this event surely, "Thwack" or "Splat" would have been more appropriate. Can anyone help out?

Well, it has been nice talking to you, again, and I could go on forever but I really must think of the rain forests.

Lionel Pairpoint

Bert Bishop's
BING ON THE BOX

Probably, most of us have played Trivial Pursuit at some time or the other, or indulged in this harmless but entertaining activity in other areas. Crosswords, quizzes, spot-the-tune are all examples of a simple but very human desire to test our skill and knowledge - often competitively. Most of this information is casually acquired as we journey through life. On other occasions, such as studying for Mastermind, or in the pursuit of our various hobbies, deliberate research enhances the ability to come up with the answers. At the moment there is considerable, seriously undertaken research going on among ICC management and members to chronicle in detail Bing's life and career. The diligence of this research is most definitely not the pursuit of trivia! What could be so rightly described, though, is the spotting and collecting of (if I might coin a phrase here) 'bagatelle Crosbyana'. In this regard I confess to being an addict, as one or two examples in this issue's columns will reveal! So, what are we looking at here as we peruse the winter months' offerings?

NOVEMBER

HIGH TIME Sky Movies Gold 9th. 21st
STAR NIGHT AT THE COCOANUT GROVE TNT 12th.

DECEMBER

ROBIN AND THE 7 HOODS BBC2 9th.
THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT 11 Sky Movies Gold 14th.
BLUE SKIES Sky Movies Gold 18th.
2 POINT 4 CHILDREN BBC1 24th.
WHITE CHRISTMAS Sky Movies Gold 25th.
THIS IS YOUR LIFE - BOB HOPE BBC1 27th..
ANGELS IN THE OUTFIELD TNT 28th.

JANUARY

TWO TICKETS TO BROADWAY Disney Channel 4th.
BIOGRAPHY - BING CROSBY History Channel 4th.
BIOGRAPHY - BOB HOPE History Channel 5th.
THE MAGIC OF BING CROSBY Channel 4 6th.
MY FAVORITE BRUNETTE Sky Movies Gold 10th.
MISSISSIPPI N3 14th
HIGH SOCIETY Sky Movies Gold 15th.
WHITE CHRISTMAS Sky Movies Gold 20th.
THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT TNT 28th.
LITTLE BOY LOST

FEBRUARY

The Movie Channel 4th. 12th. 20th. 28th.
THE COUNTRY GIRL Sky Movies Gold 5th.

As predicted, and subsequently confirmed, STAR NIGHT AT THE COCOANUT GROVE was screened on TNT again, and the ICC grapevine enabled several members to catch this rare, twenty minute gem in which Bing sings "With Every Breath I Take". It meant staying up until 01.40 on the morning of the 12th, but I wasn't going to risk the not unknown likelihood of failing to programme the VCR properly! It was well worth the wait for although Bing had already featured the song in the 1934 film HERE IS MY HEART, this 1935 MGM Technicolor first for Bing featured him again, in best possible voice, with Robin - Rainger's melodic ballad in one of several night-club scenes designed to showcase contemporary film stars. But this was just the beginning of several visual events for eagle-eyed aficionados on the qui vive for uncommon, noteworthy or just plain curious Crosbyana. Continuing with this theme it was gratifying to find Bing's "White Christmas" featured in the opening sequence of 2 Point 4 Children. Always amusing, the Christmas special began with the normally harassed housewife and mother, Bill Porter, in a visual dream of her perfect Christmas. Her family had prepared the Yuletide feast at which they were seated and were going to clear the table and wash up after. Outside it was gently snowing and Bing could be heard singing his famous song to enhance her domestic idyll. "And then I woke up!", explains Bill to Rona, in a quick scene-dissolve back to Christmas Eve. Thereafter the Porter family's Christmas deteriorated into the usual mayhem!

When the 'phone rang and Lionel Pairpoint's voice was heard saying, "You collect film trivia about Bing, don't you.", I knew that this was going to concern something out there among the satellite channels; and I was right! After some forty-four years Lionel had recalled seeing Bob Crosby in the 1951 film TWO TICKETS TO BROADWAY wherein Bob came on stage with a life-size cut-out of his brother and proceeded to do an amusing, musical sketch along the lines of what it was like to be 'the wrong Crosby'. The relatively recently launched Disney Channel screened this B-musical, which starred Eddie Bracken and PSYCHO victim Janet Leigh, as well as Tony Martin and the Bob Crosby Orchestra.

It was a mildly entertaining movie greatly enhanced by the relevant sequence. Lionel was later to record from one of the German language channels a copy of MISSISSIPPI. Apparently in excellent fidelity, and screened in English with German sub-titles, it certainly rates as a curio worth collecting.

Bing as the notorious Colonel Steele - the 'singing killer' in 'Mississippi'.

Janet Leigh was again the starring actress in the original version of ANGELS IN THE OUTFIELD, a whimsical drama concerning the ill-tempered manager of the Pittsburgh Pirates baseball team, played by Paul Douglas, who, through angelic visitations, eventually wins the pennant; gets the girl and makes a better man of himself. When the 'angels story' breaks a TV station interviews several sports personalities including Bing, who is introduced on the golf course as part owner of the team. Asked his opinion Bing replies: "You know, I think this angels stuff is pretty sound. Lots of times folks think someone's watching over them." He then proceeds to make a very long putt which wobbles round the hole before toppling in. Bing sighs, looks heavenwards, and says "Thanks!" A nice little sequence rarely seen, but bound to crop up again on Turner Network Television. Keep your eyes peeled in the programme listings! MY FAVORITE BRUNETTE also comes into the guest spot category, of course, and was described in these columns not so long ago.

There was a only very brief sight of Bing in the BOB HOPE - THIS IS YOUR LIFE post-Christmas special when a sequence from THE ROAD TO HONG KONG was shown. It has been purported that certain factions intervened to prevent this, and another programme, from promoting him. How else could it be that Bing was ignored in this blatant manner?

Turning away from these very interesting though inessential trifles it is a pleasure to report on the Anglicised version of the History Channel's Biography of Bing. As I write there is a series of these insights into personalities both factual and legendary. Bing was certainly a living legend in this century and the programme made excellent use of much early material to create a fascinating insight into the gradual development of his career. When first screened in the States the presenter was Peter Graves, and many members will have a dubbing of this version. How nice, though, to have this 'first edition quality' copy now, this time introduced by Bob Friend. 'An Actor, A Superstar And A Legend - All Rolled Into One'. 'One of the great success stories of the 20th. century' were but two of the emphatic expressions of approval by many of the dozen showbiz luminaries seen and heard in a frank, 1993 production, which also included eldest son Gary 'balancing up' the nice guy image with lurid descriptions of childhood beatings, and emphasis on Crosby's heavy, 'fall down' drinking and unreliability. But enough of the down side. Having been around when much of what was to follow was originally happening, for me the most fascinating aspects of the presentation was the visual display of early, printed news reports of the rapidly developing 'Two Boys And A Piano' act, sub-titled 'Songs, Dances and Funny Sayings' presented by Harry 'Bing' Crosby and Alton 'Al' Rinker. There was also a close up of a copy of the Bingville Bugle which showed the original Bingo with those famous ears which were to indelibly name the most famous entertainer of all time. Jack Lemmon loved the guy: "He was a great singer; I mean, really great.....he had a charisma; there was no question about that. There's some unique thing that goes into a lens and comes out on that screen", and Bing had that charisma as a further comment on his appearance with Frank Sinatra in HIGH SOCIETY in the famous library scene pointed up: "Why did he always steal these scenes from Sinatra? Sinatra is working his brains out. He was

wiry; he's energetic; but Bing is just sitting in a chair. Why is your eye always on Bing?" - Gary Giddins, who was one of the two biographers involved in the programme. Narrated by Larry Robinson this was the most detailed and interesting television documentation of Bing that I have had the good fortune to see. There can have been hardly any aspect of his long and varied life and career that wasn't covered, from family life through the Sennett shorts, radio, films television and sport. And all with a factual reality and frankness that avoided the sycophancy that can so easily end up belittling the subject. While forty-six minutes is an encapsulation far too condensed for such a great entertainer, all credit is due to the entire production team for a genuine attempt at getting it right.

On the following night we were treated to a similar, in-depth interpretation of one Robert Townes Hope. As was to be expected the plaudits flowed thick and fast in much the same manner. Made a year earlier, and narrated by Richard Cassell, the biography was also introduced by Bob Friend and entitled THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES. Within ten minutes or so the programme delved heavily into Bing and Bob's relationship brought about by the Road films. Featured in both biographies Mort Lachman, Bob's script writer, summed up the series by commenting: "All I know it was the happiest collaboration in the history of movies." An astute affirmation of what many of us truly believe. Extended clips from RIO, BALI and their cavorting on various golf courses were shown, and an elderly 'Rapid Robert' came on to comment, with undisguised endearment: "Bing was a fabulous comedian and straight man .... he was a swell guy." It's gratifying to know that America's number one ambassador is still with us and remembers with affection his old sparring partner from the golden age of radio and films.

With just seven full-length feature films in four months, and only one of those on terrestrial TV, there's been hardly a surfeit of the Old Groaner. But taken overall very few film stars rate even that, regular frequency. December was a distinct disappointment, and though WHITE CHRISTMAS and BLUE SKIES, two of Bing's best full-colour musicals, had prime time viewing on Sky Movies Gold, the BBC have been very frugal, one might even say comatosed to Crosby, with about four films over the past twelve months! I do like ROBIN AND THE 7 HOODS, but, really 'Auntie Beeb', can you not be more favourably disposed to the Paramount Pictures catalogue of the 'Thirties and 'Forties wherein, we would like you to know, lie many, many reels of 35mm magic?
LITTLE BOY LOST had its 'last play', four showings run on The Movie Channel in February. At one time this picture was quite a rarity, but a dozen screenings since this channel picked up the option has given satellite viewers plenty of opportunity to capture on tape a well acted drama and the appeal of a handful of Burke and Van Heusen melodies - particularly the scene where, in a small boat, Bing sings "The Magic Window" to le petit orphelin who may or may not be his long, lost son.

Bing and Christian Fourcade look through 'The Magic Window'.

With Sky Movies Gold providing most of the full length feature films in the preceding, monthly list it would seem that subscriber TV holds the key to our best chance of regularly seeing 'Bing on the Box' in the foreseeable future.

RADIO

The exuberant 'Dr. Swing', leads us neatly into the what's been happening in the wonderful world of the wireless since we last forgathered here. For the said 'Doctor', alias of Peter Moreton on his Radio Northampton Sunday night programme 'It Ought To Be Band', noted with his usual enthusiasm the Channel 4 presentation of THE MAGIC OF BING CROSBY which he had watched the previous afternoon prior to playing Bing's "Happy Holiday" as a celebration of the New Year; asking, with undisguised delight, if his listeners had also seen the engaging presentation of many of Bing's film and television musical performances. Being quite a fan of Sinatra the good 'Doctor' plays quite a lot of the boy from Hoboken and, in recent times, this has included the Bing and Frank medley from the G.E.C. show of 21st. March 1954 and the now famous "There's just one Bing - long live the king" musically delivered verisimilitude by Frank in another, parody, medley performed by the two top purveyors of popular songs in this or any other time.

Bill Rennells is another up and coming Crosbyphile, and his five nights a week. four-hourly stint on Radio

Oxford is beginning to feature much more Crosby material these days. This is mainly due to the efforts of Stan White, and others, who keep him informed and supplied with times, dates, places and material. This ensures that there has been an escape from the run-of-the-mill tracks leading to an excerpt from a Bing with Glenn Miller broadcast and, also from radio, "Marie Elena". Combined with "Mountain Greenery", "At The Jazz Band Ball" and the infrequently heard popular 1939 ballad from the film of the same name, "If I Had My Way", they make for a very varied selection when interposed with the more commonplace recordings he features. Reference to the prosaic prompts me to say how well Keith Skues is continuing to come along since his induction into the world of Crosbyana by the usual ICC stalwarts, and it's gratifying to note the high proportion of the 'less popular by sales' numbers he has been playing. So much so that for this edition Keith is the recipient of my 'Not The Best Of Bing' award. Bing has zoomed up through the Skuesograph leaving in his wake the likes of Glenn Miller, Cliff Richard, Nat Cole, Frank Sinatra and Matt Monro; running second by only a couple of points to Daniel O'Donnell who hangs in there by the skin of his teeth. The wide ranging selection played by Keith, which has elevated Bing to the closely contested number one position by his listeners, includes the ubiquitous "Dinah"; Sophie Tucker's big hit "Some Of These Days"; the huskily and dramatically interpreted "Goodnight Sweetheart"; Cole Porter's "All Through The Night" in the Pete Moore update; Frances Langford, Louis Armstrong and Jimmy Dorsey sharing the honours with Bing on the extended version of "Pennies From Heaven" and, believe it or not, the knowingly presented original, 1942 "White Christmas". Stan White was responsible for this very rare occurrence; the title being contrived into an anagram that was guessed immediately by dozens of listeners! In a much later programme Bing figured in what Keith calls his 'Sedate 78' spot; supposedly broadcasting directly from a 78 rpm record. In Bing's case what we heard was the beautifully delivered "Lovable" direct from the soundtrack of Mack Sennett's SING, BING, SING. To me, this Gus Kahn-Harry Woods title is superior to the commercially recorded Holmes-Simons-Whiting similarly titled song that Bing cut with the Whiteman Orchestra in 1928 and, unless privately produced, was never on shellac. Throw in a few air-shots and it can be seen that Keith Skues has shown an enterprising approach in both presentation and material.

Almost as much an institution as the event itself, Bing's "White Christmas" maintains its place as the one essential musical ingredient expected of, and delivered by, any record presenter worthy of note at the Yuletide season. Listen to Terry Wogan, who concluded his offering with the words: "You're not allowed on radio to get through Christmas without playing that at least twelve hundred times!" Indeed, that recording was heard right across the board; AM, FM, Long Wave, Short Wave, the lot!

ICC member Louis Robinson stood in for Paul Barnes until the latter's return in November. Appreciation of Bing's music has passed down from Louis' mother, and now to his fifteen year old daughter, who affirms that he is her favourite singer. Louis also made the comment that the word 'nostalgia' is not really applicable to our kind of music: "Either a recording is good or bad in the first place, and will always remain so." Louis was to play a couple of 1937 tracks during his stint; the Jimmy Dorsey accompanied "Too Marvellous For Words" and Bing's sixth recording with John Scott Trotter "The Folks Who Live On The Hill" which was originally featured in the non-Crosby film HIGH, WIDE AND HANDSOME.

With many other listeners I was fortunate to meet up with Paul Barnes at St. Ives in Cambridgeshire last October when a 'do' was organised for the 'Music That Matters' enthusiasts. The enjoyable event was run along the lines of Paul's previous programme, featuring good music, songs, anecdotes and 'listener' participation. At the time Paul was able to inform us that he would be back on the air on Radio Norfolk every Saturday night from 6.00 - 7.00 p.m. - but not a 'phone-in programme. Since then there have been further developments as follows: Saturday 6.00 - 7.00 Norfolk; then 7.00 - 9.00 Norfolk and Cambs. Sundays 7.00 - 9.00 Norfolk. Both programmes appearing in the Radio Times under the title of 'Ain't Misbehavin'. A total of five hours over the two counties at peak weekend listening time. Naturally, being an ICC member, Paul has featured 'The Boss' in many guises, from "Changes" through, "A Fine Romance", "A Gal In Calico"; to celebrate Buddy de Sylva's birthday "When Day Is Done"; "Got The Moon In My Pocket", and, for topicality "Looks Like A Cold, Cold Winter" and "Snow" - which Paul really likes; the song that is, not the white stuff! Cocking a snoot at political correctness Paul's oft-times offbeat humour was given free rein on the strange name of Milton DeLugg who, as Matty Malneck's accordionist, opens the proceedings on "Deep Purple" which Paul also featured. But Mr. DeLugg was no mug, for his c.v. would reveal him as a composer, bandleader and conductor-arranger for the Abe Burrows TV show. Perhaps his most well known achievements were his song "Orange Coloured Sky" and a working association with Frankie Laine and leader of the big band on the Johnny Carson Show. However, the

chuckles over his bizarre name are scarcely diminished by his association with songwriter Sammy Gallop! With several other tracks by 'The Boss' including radio material, and Cole Porter's pipe-dream travelogue "I've A Shooting Box In Scotland" to savour, I can only say it's nice to have you back, Paul!

The late Alan Dell's SOUNDS EASY Sunday afternoon programme on BBC's R2 under the patronage of David Jacobs who, in 'Crosby Corner', has maintained constant quality and variation will be sorely missed and do please follow the advice contained in Leslie Gaylor's article to write to the BBC in protest at this proposed loss. On the 11th. February, Leslie Gaylor was the recipient of a birthday greeting in song from an unknown informant. After telling his listeners of Leslie's long-time devotion to Mr. C. and of his visit to that famous Crosby room on the Isle of Wight, which featured in a television broadcast, David played Bing's 1945 recording with Jimmy Dorsey, "It's The Talk Of The Town" especially for the 'birthday boy'. However, to list all the Bing tracks played since September by Mr. D.J. himself becomes impractical, but an illustrative representation would include "April Played The Fiddle"; "A Nightingale Sang In Berkeley Square"; "It's Christmas Time Again"; "Coquette"; the charming duet with Debbie Reynolds from FINIAN'S RAINBOW, "Something Sort Of Grandish"; "New Vienna Woods"; "All Through The Night;" "Top Billing" and "Misty". All in all, well selected examples from the vast Crosby catalogue which made 'SOUNDS EASY - The Crosby Corner' among my favourite listening. I do hope that we do not lose it for ever.

As usual, Essex Crosbyphiles have been well looked after over the past four months, and whether you're a member of the ICC or an uncommitted admirer of the Crosby voice '78 Vintage' remains faithful to the long-time tradition of listener requested recordings in John Gunn's very own 'Crosby Corner'. First out of the starting trap was "A Fine Romance", one of two excellent tracks Bing cut with his wife, Dixie, in 1936. John brought to the public's attention Bing's comment that, "No one will ever know the ordeal I went through persuading her to make those records. Building the pyramids would have been easier!" The following couple of weeks brought us "Sweet And Lovely" and "Red Sails In The Sunset" - two very appealing 'Thirties tracks, the latter requested for her brother's birthday by a lady living in Auckland, New Zealand who regularly receives tape recordings of the programme from her sib. A couple of 'Big Band Specials' found Bing included with "Cheek To Cheek" and that great track with Woody Herman, well remembered from my youth, "I'm Thinking Tonight Of My Blue Eyes". Since his relatively recent arrival in Essex, Dennis Saville has also been a regular listener of this local radio station and on the 3rd. February had his choice of "Moonlight Becomes You" included in the 'Corner'. Respected elder statesman Eric Griffiths shares a birthday with yours truly and on the 13th. January John, in conjunction with Wally Oldfield, was sporting enough to make some appropriate and kind comments relating to the following Tuesday's anniversary musically supported by the charming 1928 recording of "Get Out And Get Under The Moon". Only a couple of weeks ago we heard one of Bing's earliest solo ballads from the 'Twenties: in May 1929, and accompanied by the musical trio of Roy Bargy, Matty Malneck and Eddie Lang, Bing recorded a lovely ballad, "I Kiss Your Hand, Madame"; but I shall always associate that song with THE EMPEROR WALTZ and the scene where he totally mesmerises Joan Fontaine, as Countess Johanna, to the point where she walks, trance-like, from the bedroom having totally forgotten her "D-O-G", as Bing reminds her!

Bing beguiles Joan Fontaine with thoughts of kissing her hand!

Finally, "Time On My Hands", from Bing's penultimate year, illustrates the totally unrestricted time-span that John's programme covers. In conclusion I'd like to thank all those who have helped to make this current review especially rewarding. A fellowship of like minds indeed!

Bert Bishop

Bing Von Trapp?

At Christmas, we enjoyed watching a programme which showed the impact that the film musical 'The Sound Of Music' has had on people. You will all know the story of Maria who falls in love with the stern Captain Von Trapp whilst she is acting as the governess to his children. Christopher Plummer played the part of the Captain in the film and sang 'Edelweiss' amongst other songs. What we did not know was that, according to the programme, the studio at one time wanted Bing for the role! The film was made in 1964 and Bing would probably have looked a bit old in the part by then but what a nice job he would have made of 'Edelweiss'. It might have given him a hit instead of Vince Hill.

Bing also cropped up on the Christmas edition of 'You've Been Framed' when two men (one bearded and dressed as a woman) were seen miming to 'Silver Bells'. Bing's voice sounded great and completely lifted the tone of the programme.

A Bing Crosby Christmas - Just Like the Ones We Used to Know

This was a 60 minute special put out by CBS in 1979 which was hosted by Kathryn Crosby and reviewed Bing's TV Christmas specials from 1962 to 1977. Advertising early in December indicated that the show was to be shown in various ITV regions on December 22 but when the relevant week's programme guide came out there was no mention of the show. Whether an argument about terms caused the withdrawal of the programme is not known but obviously something must have happened for ITV to change its schedules.

The Legend Develops

In the last edition of BING, we described the rapid development of Bing as a solo performer in 1931 and 1932 as he laid the foundations for his legendary career. We continue the story with the benefit of further cuttings from 'The Gramophone' magazine (courtesy of Trevor Wagstaff) and from Variety magazine.

In the USA in 1932, Bing had been making a sizeable impact through his personal appearances, his radio show and in films. Underlying all of this activity were many successful records and in the UK this was the main reason for Bing's popularity. The Gramophone magazine of December 1932 reviewed a new record by Bing and Duke Ellington as follows:-

'St. Louis Blues' *features Bing Crosby, and to such an extent that no one will quarrel because it has been labelled Bing Crosby with Duke Ellington and His Orchestra. After the ballad performances to which Bing has been devoting most of his time lately the brilliance of his rhythmic style will be surprising, even to those who remember the days when, with Harry Barris and Al Rinker, under the name of Paul Whiteman's Rhythm Boys, he created quite a sensation as a hot singer.*

Quite an amount of the performance takes place, however before Bing makes his entrance. In the first and second movements the story is told by trumpet and trombone respectively. I say "story is told" because these instruments really seem to speak, and their quaint, melancholy dialect has a fascination for me which I can never quite find in what may I call for convenience the legitimate idiom. It is made even more seductive by the accompaniment which always seems to me like comments in support of what the chief speaker is saying. Later, when Bing Crosby makes his voice heard, the comments become both more pertinent and more impertinent.

The following month, The Gramophone again reviewed Bing's latest records under the heading of:-

Love Songs

Bing Crosby, the king of crooners, has scored a great success in 'The Big Broadcast' which has recently been shown at the Plaza in London. His big song in this film about a mythical American broadcasting station is 'Please' and of course his record of it is now available (Brunswick 1380, 2s. 6d.), and if you are at all susceptible to crooning, Crosby is your man. On the other side he sings another song from the film, 'Here Lies Love'. On Brunswick 1404 he sings 'Let's Put Out The Lights' and 'Someday We'll Meet Again' and on 1421 'How Deep Is The Ocean?' and 'I'll Follow You'. He certainly knows how to make the most of these modern love songs, and even if you despise the cheapness of the material, you must own that the singer has a good deal of artistry as well as sex-appeal.

Meanwhile, back in the USA, Bing had started on his new radio programme for Chesterfield 'Music That Satisfies' and Variety of January 10th. 1933 carried a report on the first show broadcast on January 4th.

Radio report - Bing Crosby with Lennie Hayton's Orchestra. Songs. 15 minutes. Commercial WABC, New York.

Tom Howard, Bing Crosby and Ruth Etting are the new singers of the new Chesterfield quarter hours with Lennie Hayton the new orchestral back-up in place of Nat Shilkret. It's a saving for Chesterfield and a great break for Hayton thanks principally to Crosby who had the present singing account's maestro with him on tour as pianist / arranger and also during the making of the Paramount picture Big Broadcast. As far as this quarter hour is concerned, it is highly palatable stuff if not particularly distinguished. Crosby and Hayton are both adept but the presentation is quite formula featuring Crosby in 3 and a half songs not counting the 'Please' vamp-in, Hayton's orchestra in an OK rendition of 'Let's Put Out The Lights' and Norman Brokenshire's rather saccharine overly benign wordage in between. 'Echo in The Valley' which was scheduled for the thematic is the sign off instead. Broken into by time limitation, 'Please' after the opening bars (in itself not a bad association in view of the Paramount picture from which it comes) gives way to 'Love Me Tonight'. 'Please' is later rendered in full as is 'How Deep Is The Ocean?'. Finally 'Echo'. In taking Guy Lombardo - Burns & Allen's time Wednesday night's at 9 pm. Eastern Standard Time, it's a break for this program

Bing's film for Sennett 'Blue Of The Night' was released by Paramount on January 6th. 1933 and this was followed on March 24th. by the release of his final Sennett effort 'Sing, Bing, Sing.' He was also making records at regular intervals in New York including 'My Honey's Lovin' Arms' with the Mills Brothers on January 26th.

The volume and success of Bing's records on Brunswick in the UK led the British Decca company to use Bing's photo on the front of their February 1933 supplement and thanks to Don Haizelden we have great pleasure in reproducing the cover from those far off days.

Supplement--February 1933.
This Supplement, together with the 1932 Main Catalogue and January, 1933, Quarterly List, gives a complete list of Decca records.
DECCA
FEB.
1933
BING CROSBY
EXCLUSIVE BRUNSWICK ARTIST
DECCA is lending this front page to its sister Company, Warner-Brunswick, as a tribute to the sensational success of BRUNSWICK RECORD No. 1380—BING CROSBY singing "PLEASE" and "HERE LIES LOVE" as he sings them in the Paramount Picture, "THE BIG BROADCAST." The biggest seller since "SONNY BOY": everyone should possess this outstanding Brunswick record by Bing Crosby, "so immeasurably the greatest singer of his type in the world."
Melody Maker, January, 1933.
ALFRED IMHOF, LTD.,
Imhof House,
NEW OXFORD STREET, W.1.

Nice to see the Melody Maker comment 'so immeasurably the greatest singer of his type in the world.'

Bing had enjoyed a holiday with Dixie in Miami over the Christmas, 1932 holiday and when he returned to New York to commence his new radio programme for Chesterfield, he also arranged to make some appearances in cine-variety for $3000 per week. We probably haven't traced all of these appearances but we have seen the following:

Jan 14 - 20, 1933 At Albee Theatre, Brooklyn
Mar 3 - 9 Loew's Journal Square, Jersey City
Mar 10 - 16 Capitol, New York (co-starring with Milton Berle)
Mar 17 - 23 Valencia, Brooklyn

The Jersey City engagement is particularly significant because it was there that the 17 year old Frank Sinatra saw Bing perform and decided that he wanted to go into show business. A review of the Capitol appearance in Variety contained;

"The current visiting headliners are Bing Crosby and the Eddy Duchin Orchestra.....They liked Crosby's mike crooning, for which he carries a guitar accompanist, and demanded an encore. Later Crosby returned along with Berle to finish

off the Duchin band turn and they clowned the show to a strong finale."

Tragedy struck on March 26th when Bing's "guitar accompanist" and close friend, Eddie Lang, died at the age of 31 following a routine tonsillectomy after a blood clot formed. Bing had apparently nagged Eddie to have the operation and one can imagine his feelings. Bing accompanied the body to Philadelphia for the funeral on March 29. Bing soon left New York for Hollywood to film 'College Humor' and he broadcast his final 'Music That Satisfies' shows from there until his contract with Chesterfield finished on April 15th.

Filming of 'College Humor' commenced on April 3, 1933 and was finished in mid-May. Because of Bing's success on radio, the film of 'King Of Jazz' was re-released nation-wide on May 18 to capitalise on the situation. Bing went to Yosemite Park after completing 'College Humor' to make the shorts 'Please' and 'Just An Echo' for Paramount and location work was finished by June 2. 'College Humor' was pre-released in 4 different locations on June 16 and a national release followed on June 30. Box office receipts were high.

Meanwhile, back in the UK, the May 1933 edition of The Gramophone highlighted the recent record by Bing and the Mills Brothers.

On Bruns. 1469 the Mills Brothers join forces with Bing Crosby and an orchestra in 'My Honey's Lovin' Arms' and the result is a record which should be an unusually good seller. The backing is Bing Crosby in another of his exuberant moments, singing the well-known 'Some Of These Days', and if you like Mr. Crosby better at this sort of thing than in his sentimental moods you will thoroughly enjoy 'Someone Stole Gabriel's Horn' and 'Stay On The Right Side Of The Road' (Bruns. 1498) in which the Dorsey Brothers Orchestra is grand.

After being in the best sellers listing in the USA for many months, Bing did not have a single entry in the June listing compiled by Variety and it was timely therefore that Jack Kapp came to Hollywood that month to supervise some more recording sessions. Bing made some outstanding tracks at those sessions and I know that Leslie Gaylor for one rates the session on June 9 as Bing's best ever as he laid down 'Learn to Croon' 'Moonstruck' 'My Love' and 'I've Got To Pass Your House' for Brunswick. Bing returned to the stage during the week commencing June 23 and he made 4 appearances at the Paramount in Los Angeles alongside 'College Humor'. His son Gary was born on June 27 and perhaps he had to miss the odd appearance because of this.

Next it was time to start filming 'Too Much Harmony' and filming commenced on July 3 until mid-August. Bing really was a major star by then and it was surprising to many to see this item in Variety of August 22, 1933

Hollywood August 21. **Crosby doesn't want star billing by Par.**
Bing Crosby has requested Paramount to kill the star billing the studio has given him on 'Too Much Harmony'. He requested that he be co-featured with Jack Oakie and Skeets Gallagher. Studio has all the paper on the picture printed and feels that it can't afford to dig new paper. Crosby is insistent. Player claims that too many actors have been killed by top billing and he is not going to take a chance. Studio says that the crooner's name is one of its best assets at present and should be used for all it's worth. Situation has Crosby in the front office daily demanding that the studio pull his name down on the picture's advertising while the studio is attempting to sell him that he is big enough to carry a picture.

As we know this set a pattern for the rest of Bing's film career. Paramount, in common with other studios, used to issue a special 'press book' to support the issue of each of their major films and this contained many sample articles and advertisements which could simply be reproduced in local papers. Don Haizelden has kindly copied the press book for 'Too Much Harmony' for me and it is interesting to see that the billing varies in this from 'Bing Crosby in Too Much Harmony' to 'Too Much Harmony with Bing Crosby, Jack Oakie, Skeets Gallagher.....'. In all cases however Bing's name comes first. I bet Paramount added a few adverts to the already prepared press book with the billing changed as requested by Bing and then left the original adverts as they were (see overleaf).

We started this article by talking about Bing's records and the July 1933 music survey in Variety found Bing firmly back in the Brunswick charts. In New York 'I've Got To Sing a Torch Song' and also 'Shadow Waltz' were joint number ones with 'Down the Old Ox Rd.' and 'Blue Prelude' at No. 2. In Chicago, No. 1 was 'Learn To Croon' and 'Moonstruck' with 'Ox Rd' at No. 4 whilst in Los Angeles 'Learn To Croon' was No. 2 with 'Shadow Waltz' at No. 3 and 'Ox Rd.' at No. 4. He was back in the charts with a vengeance!

Bing had been signed to make 'Going Hollywood' at MGM with Marion Davies and production started on

time it took to make this film but I have read that only 47 days were taken in actual production (i.e. just over 9 working weeks) which is not excessive. We have not completed our researches into the rest of 1933 but we have discovered that Marion Davies was ill in the week beginning September 11 and production was suspended indefinitely. Probably the delay was only about a week because Bing had finished his work on the picture by the end of October and was scheduled to make 'We're Not Dressing'. 'Going Hollywood' was released in January 1934.

Bing was now very firmly established as a star and to complete this further look at his development we have an extract from Marion Davies' book 'The Times We Had - Life with William Randolph Hearst'. This was sent in to us by member Peter Howard.

Bing Crosby was a very fine man to work with. He was always in a very happy mood and he never paid any attention to anybody - he just paid attention to his work.

What amazed me was that when he started to sing before the Orchestra, he could sing perfectly fine with a pipe or a cigarette in his mouth. It didn't bother his throat a bit. I said to him one day, "How can you do that when you're smoking?" "It gives me that sort of husky quality."

He was very cute and very sweet, and he was crazy about his wife Dixie. And she was a darling. Every time he'd be doing a scene, his eyes would be sort of..... He had big blue eyes and you knew his mind would be way off. I knew where it was. He was wondering where Dixie was and what she was doing. He'd stay by himself and read a newspaper, and then he'd go to the phone and call up Dixie. She used to tease him, and he'd tell me, "I love Dixie. She teases me so I can't think of anything in the love scenes."

So I said "Well in our love scenes, let's make it real. You pretend I'm Dixie." "Oh, no. You're not nearly as pretty." "I understand that - but just close your eyes."

We were making 'Going Hollywood' and Bing had been making pictures at Paramount and we had borrowed him. His first day, I stayed off the set, which is the polite thing to do, because when you're new at a studio, I know how nervous you can be, and he didn't know me. But there was a certain star (Joan Crawford) who used to play Bing's records all the time on her set, and when she heard that he was working, she came over and sat under the camera. Poor Bing couldn't do his scene, and they finally had to ask her to leave the set. Now how could you do a scene with somebody staring at you with big owl eyes?

Well how true all of that from Marion Davies was I don't know and I'll have to leave it to you to decide.

Bing returned to CBS Radio on October 16, 1933 to host the Woodbury Show and we carried a review of that first show in the last edition of BING. The show was broadcast on Monday nights until May 28, 1934 and it enjoyed an audience rating of 25.1 for the season i.e. the percentage of American homes tuned in to the show. This rating made it one of the top radio shows of the season. Bing also did a week's cine-variety appearances at the Paramount

Theatre in Los Angeles from October 26th. to November 1st. 1933 when he no doubt plugged songs from 'Going Hollywood'.

Finally, another date from 1933 to conjure with - November 25, Olive Kathryn Grandstaff is born in West Columbia, Texas.

Bing was already a super star and no-one could imagine how his destiny would eventually intertwine with that of the new born baby in Texas. So there you have it, we hope you have enjoyed our trip through Bing's early years at the top as he gradually became a legend in his own lifetime.

Malcolm Macfarlane

Christmas Melodies - not a Bing item

You will have gathered that research into back copies of Variety magazine is still underway and in January the team of Macfarlane, Bosley and Pairpoint spent another 2 days at the newspaper archive of the British Library in Colindale staring at microfilms. Apart from 1933, we also looked at the Rhythm Boys tour in the Autumn of 1928. All of this research is being pumped into our project to publish a sort of diary of Bing's life and as information is entered it overlays 'facts' already in print. We had entered all of Bing's recording dates at quite an early stage of the work and as we set out the dates of the Rhythm Boys tour we realised that one of the recording dates was almost an impossibility.

On September 19, 1928, Paul Whiteman and his Orchestra made two 12" 78 recordings of 'Christmas Melodies' in New York. A vocal group added backing to 'Silent Night' and 'O, Holy Night' and it has long been felt that this included Bing, Charles Gaylord, Jack Fulton and Austin Young. There has always been a slight doubt about Bing's presence though as evidenced by Fred Reynolds comments in his Crosby Collection book "Although it is not possible to identify the voices it is generally accepted that Crosby was in the group."

Our search of Variety indicates that the Rhythm Boys spent September of 1928 entertaining at the following locations:

September 2-8 Rhythm Boys at the Palace in Chicago. From there they probably went to Rockford, Illinois where Bing is supposed to have spent a day in jail on arrival as he was drunk.
September 13-16 The boys move on to Keith's theatre at Youngstown, Ohio for more appearances.
September 17-19 The trio's next venue is Keith's at Toledo, Ohio where it has been said that the theatre manager rang the curtain down in their faces following an off colour joke.
September 20-23 Rhythm Boys perform at Keith's in Grand Rapids.
September 24-26 They go on to the Uptown Theatre at Detroit, Michigan.
September 27-30 Rhythm Boys at Hollywood theatre in Detroit.

It would seem unlikely therefore that Bing would have made the 800 mile round trip to New York to be one of a vocal chorus in the middle of this tour and we must therefore conclude that he did not participate. It is of course possible that the recording date for 'Christmas Melodies' is incorrect.

Another recording date which has been cast into doubt by the diary exercise is that of November 24, 1944 when 'The Eagle and Me' and 'Evelina' were apparently recorded in New York as master numbers relating to New York sessions were allocated. Bing was back on the west coast of the USA by then doing his Kraft shows and he was not in New York. I assume that an alternate take from the earlier session in New York on 13th. October 1944 was mastered with a new number and again the discographies ought to be annotated with this information if I am correct.

Whilst on the subject of Bing's recordings, Chas. Campbell from Dundee has drawn our attention to an alternate take of 'Too-Ra-Loo-Ra-Loo-Ral'. You will recall that Bing first recorded this song on July, 7, 1944 and then because of mechanical difficulties with the matrix, he recorded it again on April 18 and July 17 of 1945. The April 18 version was rejected and it has always been possible to spot the difference between the 1944 and 1945 versions from the use of 'me mother' in the first effort and 'my mother' in the latter. Chas points out that on the CD 'Bing: His Legendary Years 1931-57' Bing sings 'so sweet and low' after one minute 19 seconds whilst on the version on the CD 'Swinging On a Star' (MCAD-31367) he sings 'so soft and low' at the same point. Both tracks sound identical so we are guessing that they are the A and B takes from the recording session on July, 17 1945. We had never heard of this difference before and we were only aware of the A-take.

Comment from discographers would be welcomed on all three of these items.

Malcolm Macfarlane

Keeping Track

A Compact Disc Review by Jim Reilly

I have five CDs to let you know about this time around, and these vary from a Bing and Buddy Cole album, a Christmas album and an album of Bing's Irish songs. There's also a particularly interesting development with a CD-ROM audio visual disc. A few members have again asked me to be more precise on where they can obtain the CDs I list in these columns. My advice is for UK and European members to contact The Record Centre (see Trading Post) and for USA and Canadian members to use Footlight Records in New York. I do, of course, realise that it may present a problem obtaining the Christmas album at this time of year.

Bing Crosby On Radio With Buddy Cole Vol. 2. Collectors Issue BCR-02 Origin Unknown

Too Marvellous For Words	It Happened In Monterey
Get Me To The Church On Time	All The Way
Don't Get Around Much Anymore	You're Driving Me Crazy
Lullaby Of Broadway	You Took Advantage Of Me
Almost Like Being In Love	That Old Black Magic
How About You	Thank Heaven For Little Girls
I Feel A Song Coming On	Rain
Flores Negras (You're The Moment Of A Lifetime)	Arriverderci Roma
How Am I Too Know	Oh Look At Me Now
Thou Swell	This Ole House
My Blue Heaven	How Important Can It Be
With All My Heart	Taking A Chance On Love
I Can't Believe That You're In Love With Me	That's All I Want From You
Keep It Gay	A Man Chases A Girl
Then I'll Be Happy	That's The Way Love Goes
Between The Devil And The Deep Blue Sea	Mr Sandman w Lindsay Crosby
Ford Advert	Scarlet Ribbons
You Do Something To Me	Moonlight Becomes You (Closing Theme)
Ford Advert	

This a very pleasant album and I am sure it will be welcomed by those who have long been hankering for more Bing with Buddy Cole. All this material comes from radio between 1954 and 1962 and overall the quality is very good with most of the titles being new to CD. The purists amongst us may consider some of the tracks to be a little fast and there are a couple of tracks that could have been better but with a total of 35 titles plus the two Ford adverts there is plenty for everyone to enjoy. I particularly like 'Get Me To The Church On Time'; 'Lullaby of Broadway'; 'My Blue Heaven'; 'Then I'll Be Happy'; 'All The Way'; 'That Old Black Magic'; 'Thank Heaven For Little Girls' and 'This Ole House'. There's so many good songs I am sure you will be pleased to add this to your collections. Running Time: 71.41 Price £9.50
This CD can be obtained by writing direct to: El Rancho Grande, 25C Garton Close, Cinderhill, Nottingham NG6 8RZ.

Christmas Through The Years Laser Light 12 532 USA

Happy Holiday / Holiday Inn	When A Child Is Born
The Christmas Song	Silver Bells w Carol Richards
O Holy Night	Rudolph The Red-Nosed Reindeer
I'll Be Home For Christmas	Adeste Fideles
Snowbird w Count Basie & His Orchestra	All His Children w Count Basie & His Orchestra
I Sing Noel	Jingle Bells w The Andrews Sisters(B take)

This is a mixture of commercial and radio material. I can't quite see how the Count Basie numbers equate with Christmas, although the tracks in question make great listening and appear on CD for only the second time. The Ken Barnes produced 'When A Child Is Born' makes its debut on what is an excellent album - the sound quality is very good indeed and I would recommend the CD to all members. The 'Jingle Bells' version used is the B take where Bing fluffs his lines at the end. I tried to purchase this CD through my local sources without success and the copy I eventually got came from the USA.. Running Time: 33.42 Price: I don't know.
I wish you success in obtaining the album which I also understand is available as part of a Deluxe 3 CD Boxed Set - 'Christmas Through The Years' Laser Light 55 547, the other artists being Judy Garland and Frank Sinatra

Too Marvellous For Words - 25 Chart Toppers Charly Records CDGR 105 UK

Too Marvellous For Words	Don't Fence Me In w. Andrews Sisters
I've Got A Pocketful Of Dreams	Sierra Sue
I'll Be Seeing You	Trade Winds
You're Getting To Be A Habit With Me	San Fernando Valley
Out Of Nowhere	The Moon Got In My Eyes
Love In Bloom	You Must Have Been A Beautiful Baby
Sweet Leilani	June In January
Swinging On A Star	Dinah w. Mills Bros.
I Love You (Grieg)	Just One More Chance (1931)
Remember Me	Brother Can You Spare A Dime
Pennies From Heaven	Three Little Words
Moonlight Becomes You	White Christmas
Sunday Monday Or Always	

This album is from Charly's Series "Voices Of The Century" and is an excellent combination of Bing standards which make very enjoyable listening. The sleeve notes are informative and well thought out and include a couple of nice photos - the front sleeve shows Bing with a backdrop of a golf course with the same Bing pose shown on the CD. It was intended to include only songs which were top of the USA charts but by mistake, the producers of the CD have put on 'I Love You' by Grieg instead of the song with the same title by Cole Porter which did reach No. 1. Never mind the Grieg version is rarely

on CD and it's nice to have it. The sound quality of the CD is very good, it's just a pity that most of the tracks (with the exception of 'I Love You') have been somewhat over exposed to CD - the least number of appearances being 'Remember Me' (4) 'Three Little Words' (5) and 'Trade Winds' (7).
Running Time: 76.20 Price £9.99

The Radio Years
Bing Crosby Greatest Hits On Radio Vol. 1 **S.I.A.E. RY 32** **Italy**
The Mythical Studio Recordings (1931-1938)

Out Of Nowhere
Just One More Chance
Stardust
Where The Blue Of The Night
The Moon Was Yellow
Love Is Just Around The Corner
Soon
June In January
It's Easy To Remember
Without A Word Of Warning
I Wished On The Moon
Sailor Beware
I'm An Old Cowhand
Pennies From Heaven
Me And The Moon
Sweet Leilani
Too Marvellous For Words
The Moon Got In My Eyes
Remember Me
Bob White (w Connie Boswell)
It's The Natural Thing To Do
On The Sentimental Side
Alexander's Ragtime Band (w Connie Boswell)

The sleeve of this CD is so similar in appearance to the sleeve of "Bing Crosby On Radio In The Thirties" reviewed in the last issue that I nearly mistook it for that CD when I saw it in my local record shop. This time the "Mythical Studio Recordings" are of course commercial recordings and with a few exceptions, the correct recording dates are shown on the sleeve. Track 12 is shown as "I'm An Old Cowman" and "Alexander's Ragtime Band" becomes "Alexander's Ragtime Bands" otherwise they have the correct titles The sound has a bit of echo added, although to my ear it is of an acceptable standard. Titles such as 'Sailor Beware', 'Without A Word Of Warning', 'Me And The Moon', 'I Wished On The Moon', 'It's The Natural Thing To Do', 'The Moon Was Yellow' and 'Remember Me' have only made limited appearances on CD although all other tracks have made numerous appearances.
Running Time: 70.45 *Price: £7.99*

Just prior to going to press I obtained the details of a new CD by MCA which is scheduled for release in the USA on St Patrick's Day, so by the time you read these notes (with any luck) copies may be available. I have not heard the CD but, based on previous MCA releases, the quality should be OK. Hopefully I'll review it in the next issue of BING. American ICC Representative Wig Wiggins has co-operated with MCA and produced the excellent sleeve notes.

Top O' The Morning / His Irish Collection **MCA Records MCAD-11046** **USA**

When Irish Eyes Are Smiling
McNamara's Band
Galway Bay
Top O' The Morning
Rosaleen
How Can You Buy Killarney
It's The Same Old Shillelagh
Too-Ra-Loo-Ra-Loo-Ral (1944)
The Rose Of Tralee
Dear Old Donegal
Danny Boy
St Patrick's Day Parade
I'll Take You Home Again Kathleen
The Donovans
Where The River Shannon Flows
Eileen
With My Shillelagh Under My Arm
My Girl's An Irish Girl
That Tumbledown Shack In Athlone
Two Shillelagh O'Sullivan
The Isle Of Innisfree
Who Threw The Overalls in Mrs. Murphy's Chowder
Did You Mother Come From Ireland
Too-Ra-Loo-Ra-Loo-Ral (1945)

This must surely be the definitive collection of Bing's Irish songs with the commercial versions of 'Top O' The Morning'; 'Rosaleen' and 'That Tumbledown Shack In Athlone' making their first appearances on CD. 'Danny Boy' has not had much exposure (3 times) and the 1944 version of 'Too-Ra-Loo-Ra-Loo-Ral' makes it's first appearance since it was first issued. Astute collectors will know that this CD is virtually a re-release of the albums "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling" and "Shillelaghs and Shamrocks" although they may wonder what happened to "Tobermory Bay" - the odd one out because it was of course a Scottish song. This CD has five titles that didn't appear on the Australian released 'St Patrick's Day Parade' which was issued in 1994.

CASSETTE
Road To Hollywood - Bing, Bob Hope & Dorothy Lamour **Golden Memories GMAC 102**
Holiday Inn - Bing with Dinah Shore

Side A
My Heart Goes Crazy -Bing
The Road To Hollywood Sketch
Put It There Pal w Bob Hope
Tumbling Tumbleweeds - Bing
Sweet Violets w Bob Hope
Road To Morocco w Bob Hope & Dorothy Lamour
Have I Told You Lately That I Love You (w. Hope)
Side B
I'll Capture Her Heart w Fred Astaire
Lazy - Bing
White Christmas w Dinah Shore
Let's Start The New Year Right
Happy Holiday w Dinah Shore
Be Careful It's My Heart - Bing
Easter Parade w Dinah Shore
White Christmas w Dinah Shore

I understand that this particular cassette is only available through certain bookshops, although I have no idea where you might be able to find them - I'll keep you informed if I find out more details. Write to Golden Memories, Mercury House, 8 St. James' Terrace, Malahide, Co. Dublin, Ireland if you have problems in obtaining the cassette. This is part of a series of cassettes with other titles including, 'Casablanca'; 'Brief Encounter' and 'The Maltese Falcon'. Side A is more or less the complete Philco Show of 29th January 1947 although some licence has been employed with the addition of 'Sweet Violets' and 'Have I told You Lately That I Love You' (from later Chesterfield shows) with the Philco Adverts, 'Ja Da' and 'You Keep Coming Back Like A Song' being omitted. Side B has Bing and Dinah Shore in the Screen Guild Broadcast of 11th January

1943 singing the songs from Holiday Inn which was previously released on the Spokane 15 album "Holiday Inn and The Bells Of St Mary's" with one or two commercial tracks added. The presentation of the cassette is very nice and the sound quality is good.
Running Time: 60 Minutes. Price: £7.99

GUEST APPEARANCES for those who like to collect everything:

The No. 1 Christmas Album (2 CD Set) **Polygram TV 525 978-2** **UK**
40 Tracks (1 Bing) White Christmas

Frank Sinatra....and Friends **Hallmark 300022** **UK**
21 Tracks (3 Bing)
TILL WE MEET AGAIN: Meet Me Tonight In Dreamland / There's A Long Long Trail; PARODY MEDLEY: It Could Happen To You / I Heard You Cry Last Night / I'll Get By/I Don't Believe It But Say It Again / Out Of Nowhere / Going My Way / Sunday Monday Or Always; MR SINATRA & MR CROSBY: Among My Souvenirs / September Song / As Time Goes By
The contents of this CD are the same as Frank Sinatra: The Live Duets 1943-1957 reviewed in BING 108. All the songs are from radio or television and the quality is good. The original CD was much dearer although it had a total of 37 tracks. Price: £3.99 at my local 'Our Price'.

Sinatra 80th All The Best (2 CD Set) **Capitol 7243 8 3595228** **UK**
40 Tracks (1 Bing) Well Did You Evah
This set has a nice selection of Sinatra standards and the quality is excellent. I've seen it in my local record shops for as much as £18.99 although I purchased my copy for £13.49

Frank Sinatra The Complete Reprise Records **Reprise CD 46013-2** **USA**
(20 CD Set) 453 Tracks (9 Bing) the Bing content being:
Disc 7 Fugue For Tin Horns; The Oldest Established (Permanent Crap Game In NY); Style; Let Us Break Bread Together and You Never Had It So Good.
Disc 8 Mister Booze; Don't Be A Do-Badder (Finale); Go Tell It On The Mountain and We Wish You The Merriest
This set rather puts MCA to shame even though this is Frank Sinatra's 80th birthday year and new issues are in abundance. I am given to understand that the sound quality is state of the art. Mind you the price is something else at about $440

THE INTERNET
It never ceases to amaze me where Bing material crops up these days. I am told by Member Frans van der Kolff of Holland that a great deal of Bing information can be seen by 'Surfing the net' (see article elsewhere in this issue). Frans tells me that many record companies offer their catalogues on the Internet and that that most of the recent CD issues are shown as well as the following which were previously unknown to me:-

Rosemary Clooney - Demicentennial **Concord Jazz CCD 4633** **USA**
This CD commemorates Rosemary's 50th year in show business and contains a track 'Old Friends' which has some dialogue with Bing and Bob Hope, from a radio show, cleverly edited into the song

The Edge Of Christmas **Oglio Records OGL 81585** **USA**
12 Tracks (1 Bing) Peace On Earth / Little Drummer Boy w D Bowie

The Coolest Christmas **Oglio Records OGL 81570** **USA**
Only thing known is the (1 Bing Track) Peace On Earth / Little Drummer Boy w D Bowie

In these days of computers, the most interesting new development is **CD-ROM**
David Bowie & Bing Crosby -Peace On Earth / Little Drummer Boy Oglio Records OGL 85001-2
This disc contains both the standard full length audio version and the full length music video of this Christmas classic. Any standard audio CD player can play the music track and if you have a CD-ROM equipped Macintosh computer or a multimedia PC computer you can also view the music video. The data on the disc is trade marked I-Trax Please ensure that your system is compatible and has enough 'memory' etc. before purchasing this item. The sound quality played as a CD is excellent. I didn't find the quality to be as acceptable when played as a music video and the picture was only good when viewed in a relatively small size. The presentation is very good with a full colour picture of the CD sleeve appearing on the monitor screen at start up and at the end with the film appearing within part of the sleeve until Bing and David Bowie finish singing. This gives a very pleasant overall affect. The action of course comes from Bing's Merrie Olde Christmas Show and covers Bing letting David Bowie in through the front door and continues until the song is completed. As far as I know this is a first for Bing and I find it to be a fascinating development. Perhaps some keen entrepreneur will look at film sound tracks for any future Bing audio/visual CDs. For those who might want to obtain this disc I suggest that it may be easier to write direct to Oglio Records PO Box 404-BB, Redondo Beach CA 90277 and you could mention that you saw it reviewed in BING. I understand that the Price is $6.98 + $10 shipping and handling charge UK or $6.98 + $4 shipping and handling for USA..

FROM MY CRYSTAL BALL I hear MCA are still planning to release an Andrews Sisters CD with Bing titles included, although if this prediction is as good as the previous CDs I've seen through my Crystal Ball, I'll be as good as Mystic Meg with her lottery predictions.

Happy listening until next time.....

Jim Reilly

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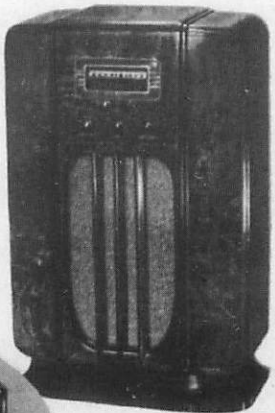

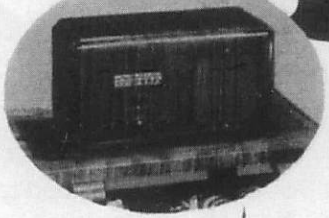

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